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YSTICAL FELLOWSHIP

THE SCIENCE OF CHRISTLINESS

THE

COMPILED BY
RICHARD DE BARY

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MYSTICAL FELLOWSHIP

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THE SCIENCE OF CHRISTLINESS

A CATHOLIC EIRENICON

FROM THE EXPONENTS OF THE MYSTICAL GOSPEL
OF BROTHERLINESS

COMPILED BY

RICHARD DE BARY

PRIVATE CHAPLAIN TO THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY
CHAPLAIN TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

"Therefore frame and shape thyself to be arrayed in His likeness"
HILTON

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TO

A. T.

PREFACE

DURING the Middle Ages the Gleam of Christ lay hid in the implicit brotherliness of men's Catholicity, a brotherliness which was taken for granted by every one as the air which men daily breathed.

To-day the earth clamours for brotherliness again, as the earth once clamoured for its Emanuel. But these two cries are really the same cry, since those who now pray for brotherliness are prophets, and true prophets, of the Mystical Return of Christ.

The Mystical Gospel of Fellowship taught in these pages in the written words of the Saints of Christ, although they were written long ago, yet bring us instinctively not into any past world, but into the good world of the future which is descending out of Heaven from God.

They contain, in effect, gleams from that Catholicity of the ages, which no new happenings of this or that century shall ever leave behind.

Contrasted with the raging controversies of the hour, they present us with a great affirmative view of God and Man ; while these controversies themselves present us with but negations of brotherliness. These negations, compared with the Mystical

Gospel, we then feel, are barren, aged, and accursed; while the Mystical Gospel is the message of a New Nazareth of private life and contemplation; and from thence the "New Jerusalem," the social, earthly, paradise.

The purpose, however, of this book is not to preach the Mystical Gospel, but rather to bring readers in contact with some of its treasures, and to show these treasures in an order and interpretation in which the value to the present and to the future can be well ascertained.

The note of the Mysticism of Fellowship, that is, of genuine Catholic Mysticism, is its apprehension of the living, and, so to speak, corporeal, reality of every dogma of the Church of God.

The treasure and precious coin in any bank are not correct or incorrect opinions or theories about money; but they are realities, which, as all the world knows, must be preserved intact, and which will never come back again of themselves once they are dissipated or lost.

This work is a call to see what precious realities have been kept by the bankers or custodians of dogma; in order that eventually they may be distributed among the people; that is, interpreted in their real value; and from thence desired as precious coin.

The treasure of the Church is the Secret of Christliness; that is, of that sense of Brotherliness

with All that the whole world to-day longs to possess.

In order that we may be perfect disciples of, or adepts in, brotherliness, we must become disciples of the Mystical Christ, the "Angelic Shepherd" of mankind, in mystical perpetuation of those disciples who gathered round Him to learn of Christliness in Palestine.

Following the course of this Mystical Science, and training, we find that there are a series of lessons taught to each pupil culminating in the lesson of the "Sacred Interchange of Being" with Christ and Christliness, namely, the lesson of the rightly understood Holy Eucharist.

We hereby learn the amazing, but after all very obvious truth, that the Paradise of Christ is His own virtue, right, and ability to act with Christliness towards all men. While, then, we are seemingly but taken up into His Heaven, we are, in actuality, brought down at the same time from thence in a sense we had never before dreamed of, into fellowship with real and earthly men.

The Paradise of every Christ-lover is thus revealed as the virtue, right, and ability of every Christ-lover to act with Christliness, that is with brotherliness, towards all men. Granted this inner victory, the outward victory of brotherhood will follow in necessary consequence.

In one moment thereby all religion is, in spirit,

socialised. Not that Heaven and the Hereafter cease to be; rather they become infinitely and divinely real, and portend the Social Paradise on earth; though, after all, it is equally true to say that earth has thereby entered the eternal heaven to reign with God.

Herein is the whole heart of the Catholic Mysticism of Fellowship. It is the purpose of this book to bear witness to its chief and central realities. When these things are apprehended, it will be time enough to show how their apprehension will be the forerunning of a Mystical Parousia of Christ.

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BELFAST, *Feast of St. Agnes,* 1907.

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LORD, Thou art mine, and I am thine;
If mine I am; and thine much more,
Than I or ought or can be mine.
Yet to be thine doth me restore;
So that again I now am mine
And with advantage mine the more
Since Thou being mine, brings with it thine,
And Thou with me dost Thee restore.
If I without Thee would be mine,
I neither should be mine nor thine.
Oh, be mine still! Still make me thine,
Or rather make no thine nor mine.

GEORGE HERBERT.

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

MEDIÆVAL Piety knew that God was the infinite Source of life, being, and health. All things were, indeed, good and desirable, but they only were so in the eternal social justice of God's kingdom. Mediæval Catholicity was the whole affirmation of life and health in a deeply realistic sense. Because God is taken by most of us as a mere thought or a mere negation of this or that, the titles "Life," "Health," and "Being" are given here in order faithfully and accurately to render their due modern equivalent to the thoughts of Catholic and Messianic inclusiveness of Mediæval thinkers.

It was moreover recognised that every one's natural capacity for divine religion was identical with every one's natural capacity for living by inner simplicity of intention and singleness of heart.

I

That the gift of Holy Fellowship and the kingdom of God is a free gift offered to all men and held by the Donor ever near beside us.

"Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."
Luke XXI. 31.

OUR Lord says here that the kingdom of God is nigh to us. Yea, the kingdom of God is in us; and St. Paul says, that now is our salvation nearer to us than we believe.

Now ye ought to know, first, *how* the kingdom of God is nigh at hand; secondly, *when* the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

Now we must give earnest heed to take note of all that is contained in these words, "The kingdom of God is nigh at hand." For if I were a king, and did not know it, I should be no king; but if I were fully convinced that I was a king, and if all men deemed me so likewise, and further, if I knew that all men deemed me such, I should be a king, and all the riches of the king would be mine. But if any of these three things were wanting, I could be no king.

In like manner does our blessedness depend upon our perceiving and knowing the Highest Good, which is God Himself. I have a power in my soul which enables me to perceive God; I am as certain as that I live that nothing is so near to me as God. He is nearer to me than I am to myself. It is part of His very essence that He should be nigh and present to me.

He is also nigh a stone or a tree, but they do not know it. If a tree could know God, and perceive His presence as the highest of the angels perceives it, the tree would be as blessed as the highest angel. And it is because man is capable of perceiving God, and knowing how nigh God is to him, that he is better off than a tree.

And he is more blessed or less blessed in the same measure as he is aware of the presence of God. It is not because God is in him, and so close to him, and he hath God, that he is blessed, but because he perceives God's presence and knows and loves Him; and such a one will feel that God's kingdom is nigh at hand.

MEISTER ECKHARDT.

II

The Great God, and Infinite Life and Health, is His own Kingdom, but He is also in all the Society of Creation.

OFTEN when I meditate on the kingdom of God, I cannot speak for the greatness thereof. For the kingdom of God, what is it but God Himself with all His riches? The kingdom of God is no small thing. If we think of all the worlds that God could create, that is not the kingdom of God. When the kingdom of God is manifested in a soul, and she knows it, you need not to preach or to teach: for that soul is taught of God and assured of eternal life. He who knows and perceives how nigh God's kingdom is, may say with Jacob: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

God is alike near in all creatures. The wise man says: "God hath spread out His nets and snares over all creatures, so that he who desireth to perceive Him, may find Him in every one of them."

A Master has said: "He knoweth God aright who knoweth Him in all things alike." He who

serveth God with fear, it is good ; he who serveth Him with love, it is better ; but he who in fear can love, that is the best of all.

That a man should have a life of quiet or rest in God is good ; that a man should live a painful life in patience is better ; but that a man should have rest in a painful life is best of all.

Whether a man walk out in the fields, and say his prayers and feel God's presence, or whether he be in the church and feels God's presence, does he perceive Him any better because he is in a place of rest? If he do, it comes from his own infirmity ; the difference is not on God's side, for God is in all things and places alike, and is ever alike ready to give Himself to us, in so far as we are able to receive Him ; and he knows God aright who sees Him in all things.

JOHN TAULER.

III

God the Source and Health of all speaks within and through our being.

"That the truth speaketh inwardly without noise or words."

SPEAK, Lord, for Thy servant heareth: I am Thy servant: grant me understanding that I may know Thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the words of Thy mouth: let Thy speech distil as the dew.

The children of Israel in times past said unto Moses: Speak thou unto us and we will hear; let not the Lord speak unto us: lest we die.

Not so, Lord, not so I beseech Thee: but rather with the prophet Samuel I humbly and earnestly entreat: Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.

Let not Moses speak unto me nor any of the prophets: but rather do Thou speak, Lord God, Inspirer and Enlightener of all prophets; for Thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me: but they without Thee can profit nothing.

They indeed may sound forth words: but they cannot give the Spirit. Beautifully do they speak:

but if Thou be silent they kindle not the heart. They teach the letter: but Thou openest the sense. They bring forth mysteries: but Thou unlockest the meaning of sealed things. They declare Thy commandments: but Thou helpest to fulfil them. They shew the way: but Thou givest strength to walk in it.

What they do is all without: but Thou instructest and enlightenest the heart. They water outwardly: but Thou givest fruitfulness. They cry aloud in words: but Thou impartest understanding to the hearing.

Let not Moses, therefore, speak unto me, but Thou, O Lord my God the Eternal Truth: lest we die and prove unfaithful, if I be only warned outwardly and not kindled inwardly; lest the word turn to my condemnation if it be heard and not done, known and not loved, believed and not observed.

Speak therefore, Lord, for Thy servant heareth: for Thou hast the words of eternal life. Speak Thou unto me to the partial comfort of my soul and to the perfect amendment of my life: and to Thy praise and glory and everlasting honour.

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

IV

The Principles of Union and Fellowship with the Source and Health of all being.

In order to understand what union with God is we must remember that in every soul, even that of the greatest sinner in the world, God dwells and is substantially present.

This union or presence of God in the order of nature exists between Him and all His creatures. By this He preserves them in being, and if He withdraws it they immediately perish and cease to be.

And so, when I speak of the union of the soul with God, I do not mean this substantial presence which is in every creature, but that union and transformation of the soul in God by love which is only then accomplished when there subsists the likeness which love begets.

For this reason shall this union be called the union of likeness, as the other is essential or substantial union, in the sense that the creature would cease to exist were that union or presence with-

drawn. The latter one is natural, the other is supernatural, which takes effect when two wills, the will of God and the will of the soul, are conformed together, neither desiring aught repugnant to the other.

Thus the soul, when it shall have driven away from itself all that is contrary to the Divine will, becomes transformed in God by love. . . .

Though it may be true, as I have said, that God is always in every soul, bestowing upon it and preserving to it, by His presence, its natural being, yet for all this He does not always communicate the supernatural life.

For this is given only by love and grace, to which all souls do not attain ; and those souls which do, do not in the same degree, for some arise to higher degrees of love than others.

That soul, therefore, has greater communion with God which is most advanced in love ; that is, whose will is most conformable to the will of God.

And that soul which has reached perfect conformity and resemblance is perfectly united and supernaturally transformed in God. . . .

In order that we may have a clearer notion of the one and the other, let us consider the following illustration :—The sun, with its rays, strikes a window, but if that window be stained and unclean the sun cannot shine through it nor transform

it perfectly into itself as it would have done had it been clean and unsullied.

This depends not on the sun, but on the window, so that if the latter were perfectly clean the rays of the sun would so shine through it and so transform it as to make it seem identical with the rays of the sun, preserving still its own separate substance.

In this case we might say that the window is a ray or light by participation. Thus the soul resembles the window; the Divine light of the presence of God in the order of nature perpetually strikes upon it, or, rather, dwells within it.

The soul, then, by resigning itself, in removing from itself every spot and stain of the creature, which is to keep the will perfectly united to the will of God (for to love Him is to labour to detach ourselves from, and to divest ourselves of everything which is not God for God's sake), becomes immediately enlightened by and transformed in God.

He communicates His own supernatural Being in such a way that the soul seems to be God Himself, and to possess the things of God.

Such a union is then wrought when God bestows upon the soul that supreme grace which makes the things of God and the soul one by the transformation which renders the one a partaker of the other.

The soul seems to be God rather than itself, and, indeed, is God by participation, though in reality preserving its own natural substance distinct from that of the rays of the sun shining through it and making it light.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS.

V

The Acquisition of Divine Strength through the practice of Renouncement.

When we say, as Christ also saith, that we ought to resign and forsake all things, this is not to be taken in the sense that a man is neither to do nor to purpose anything; for a man must always have something to do and to order so long as he liveth. But we are to understand by it that the union with God standeth not in any man's powers, in his working or abstaining, perceiving or knowing, nor in that of all the creatures taken together.

Now what is this union? It is that we should be of a truth purely, simply, and wholly at one with the One Eternal Will of God, or altogether without will, so that the created will should flow out into the Eternal Will, and be swallowed up and lost therein, so that the Eternal Will alone should do and leave undone in us.

Now mark what may help or further us towards this end. Behold, neither exercises, nor words, nor works, nor any creature nor creature's work can do this.

In this wise, therefore, must we renounce and forsake all things, that we must not imagine or suppose that any words, works, or exercises, any skill or cunning or any created thing can help or serve us thereto. Therefore we must suffer these things to be what they are, and enter into the union with God.

Yet outward things must be, and we must do and refrain so far as is necessary, especially we must sleep and wake, walk and stand still, speak and be silent, and much more of the like. These must go on so long as we live.

THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

VI

The Upwelling of eternal Health in Communion with God.

When union with God truly cometh to pass and becometh established, the inward man standeth henceforward immoveable in this union; and God suffereth the outward man to be moved hither and thither, from this to that, of such things as are necessary and right. So that the outward man saith in sincerity: "I have no will to be or not to be, to live or die, to know or not to know, to do or to leave undone, and the like; but I am ready for all that is to be, or ought to be, and obedient thereunto, whether I have to do or to suffer."

And thus the outward man hath no Wherefore or purpose, but only to do his part to further the Eternal Will. For it is perceived of a truth, that the inward man shall stand immoveable, and that it is needful for the outward man to be moved.

And if the inward man have any Wherefore in the actions of the outward man, he said only that such things must be and ought to be, as are

ordained by the Eternal Will. And where God Himself dwelleth in the man, it is thus; as we plainly see in Christ.

Moreover, where there is this union, which is the offspring of a Divine light and dwelleth in its beams, there is no spiritual pride or irreverent spirit, but boundless humility, and a newly broken heart; also an honest, blameless walk, justice, peace, content, and all that is of virtue must needs be there.

Where they are not, there is no right union, as we have said. For just as neither this thing nor that can bring about or further this union, so there is nothing which hath power to frustrate or hinder it, save the man himself with his self-will, that doeth him this great wrong. Of this be well assured.

THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

VII

The training in Holy Fellowship causes a return, through life and death, towards the Source of Eternal Life and Health.

If the spiritual beginner is careful to exercise his soul daily, and thus to unite himself to God; if, through internal conversations and loving desire, he strives without ceasing to join himself to God; if he takes care to persevere constantly in self-denial and mortification and never gives up his holy purpose, either on account of his frequent falls or because he becomes discouraged by the innumerable distractions of his mind, he will certainly arrive at perfection and mystical union, if not in this life at least in death. And even if he should not arrive at it then, most certainly will he arrive at it after the death of the body.

For in eternity he will enjoy that perfect union in greater or less degree, according to the greater or less intensity of the desire with which he sought it here below. God will bestow upon us an eternal reward for our good desires, even though in this pilgrimage we never attain to what we desire.

Therefore deal manfully. Ask, seek, knock with perseverance, and patiently wait. Call to mind the faithful promise of the Lord Jesus: "Every one who asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (Luke xi. 10).

Believe, without doubt, that not even the least little prayer nor the least sigh breathed forth to God can go without its fruit.

The perfection you desire and have not yet attained, love in others, who are God's special friends. Rejoice, and thank God for the gifts which the Lord confers on them. Thus, far removed from all envy, you can make the good things bestowed on others your own by charity and sincere rejoicing with them.

The spiritual man will find much fruit from frequently considering in his mind such words as these: "O Lord God, Thou art always present with me, dwelling in the inmost sanctuary of my soul. O most simple and most joyful good, when shall I find Thee, when shall I cleave closely to Thee? O my beginning, from Whom I am, most desirable in Thyself, when shall I return to Thee and be supernaturally transformed after laying aside the old form? O God, my Lord, have mercy on me, a poor exile; have mercy on me, a vile sinner. Wash and sanctify my heart; raise up and enlighten my mind.

"Make my soul pure, simple, free and detached. Make me a man after Thine own Heart. Kindle within me the fire of Thy love, and entirely consume me in it, that my soul, utterly melted, may flow into Thee, may be united to Thee without any medium, face to face, to the praise of Thy name. O living Son of God, Jesus Christ, make me conformed to Thy sacred human nature."

Louis Blosius.

VIII

The inner Communion with the Infinite Wealth of all being.

HAPPY indeed is that soul which is filled constantly with an earnest desire for purity of heart and holy introversion, or recollection of spirit, and entirely renounces all self-love, self-will, and self-seeking. For such a soul merits to approach nearer and nearer to God.

At last, when its higher powers have been raised up, enlightened, and adorned by Divine grace, the spirit will attain to a simple unity, and will arrive at pure love without images in the imagination, and at a simple knowledge of the mind without reflections. In this state, since it is now capable of receiving from God a grace of unspeakable excellence, it is brought to that living fountain which floweth forth from eternity and with exceeding abundance refresheth the minds of the saints.

Now the powers of the soul shine like the stars, and the soul itself is fit to contemplate the abyss of the Godhead with a calm, simple, and joyful

intuition, without any imagination and without any reflections in the intellect.

When, therefore, the soul in this purified state turns itself entirely to God with love, an incomprehensible light shining in its depths, the eye of the reason and intellect is obscured by the dazzling light, but the simple eye of the soul itself remains open and not dazed by the light. This eye is a pure, simple, uniform *thought*, raised above all *reflections* of the intellect.

Moreover, as the natural light of the intellect is darkened by such excess of light, the soul sees nothing in time, but raised above time and place, takes to itself, as it were, a certain characteristic of eternity.

For, losing the sight of all images and the distinction and consideration of created things, it learns now by experience that God far transcends all bodily, spiritual, and Divine images, as well as all the mind can understand about Him, whatever can be said or written about Him, and whatever name can be given Him.

The soul clearly perceives that all these things are infinitely distant from the real truth of the Divine Essence, and the Essence of God is above all names. The soul does not see the Essence of God, whose presence it feels.

Hence, with an intuitive knowledge of God, without any exercise of thought, it rests quiet in

the love of God, pure, simple, and yet unknown, because above all comprehension. For, in truth, the divine light, on account of its exceeding brightness, is inaccessible, whence also it is called darkness.

Here the soul receives the hidden word which God speaks in the inward silence and in the secret depths of the soul. This hidden word it receives, and experiences the happy embrace of mystical union.

For when, through love, the soul goes beyond all work of the intellect and all images in the mind, and is rapt above itself (a favour only God can bestow), utterly leaving itself, it flows into God: then is God its peace and fullness. In this peace of mind the soul can rightly sing: *In pace, in idipsum, dormiam et requiescam*—"In peace, in the self-same, I will sleep and I will rest."

The loving soul, as I have said, flows out of itself and completely leaves itself; and as if brought to nothing, it sinks down into the abyss of Divine Love, where, dead to itself, it lives in God, knowing, feeling nothing save only the love that it tastes.

It loses itself in the infinite solitude and darkness of the Godhead; but so to lose itself is rather to find itself.

Then, putting off whatever is human and put-

ting on what is Divine, it is, as it were, transformed and changed into God as iron placed in fire receives the form of fire and is changed into fire. Just as the iron thus glowing with fire does not cease to be iron, so the soul, as it were, deified, does not change its nature and still remains itself.

The soul, therefore, remains itself; but whereas it was cold before, now it burns; whereas it was dark before, now it shines with light; whereas it was hard before, now it has become soft.

The Essence of God has so flowed into its essence that we may say the soul has, as it were, the same tint or colour.

Enkindled with the fire of Divine Love, and entirely liquefied, the soul passes into God, is united to Him without any medium, and becomes with Him one spirit, even as gold and brass are welded into one mass of metal.

Among the souls who are thus carried out of themselves and rapt into God there are different degrees of the Divine favour, for they are more deeply and sublimely absorbed into God in proportion to the efficacious and ardent way in which their love turns to Him, and in proportion to the perfection of their self-denial and freedom from all self-seeking.

LOUIS BLOSIUS.

IX

In our oneness with all Creation through a simple mind and a single heart we are gathered into oneness also with the Simple Mind and the Single Heart of God.

WHICH is the road that we may go forth on to meet the Lord? the road of the most perfect resemblance and most blissful union? Every good act, however small, provided it be referred to God by simplicity of intention, augments in us the Divine likeness and replenishes us with eternal life.

Simplicity of intention collects the dispersed powers of the soul into unity of spirit, and unites the spirit itself to God. It is simplicity of intention which honours and praises God, which offers and presents our virtues to Him; thus entering into and overstepping itself and all creatures, the soul finds God in its own depths. Simplicity is the beginning and end of all virtues, their splendour and their glory.

I call a simple intention, that which aims at God alone, referring all things to Him, conformably with order and truth. It puts to flight all pretence, hypocrisy, duplicity; in every possible

action simplicity should be chiefly aimed at, practised and cultivated. This places man in the presence of God and gives him light and courage. This sets him free from all vain and servile fear, now and at the Day of Judgment. It is that single eye of which the Lord speaks, as giving light to the whole body; that is, to the whole vital energy, which it delivers from evil. It is the interior inclination of the enlightened spirit: the foundation of the whole spiritual life.

Full of trust in God and faithful to Him it folds hope and charity in its embrace. It treads corrupt nature underfoot, gives peace, and stills the useless disquietudes which arise within us; it is rest, hope, and confidence, now and at the last day. By means of it we shall persevere in unity of spirit. Adorned with grace, and the Divine resemblance, we shall go to meet the Lord by the path of the virtues. For this simplicity of intention will offer to Him our whole vital energy, increasing in us from hour to hour the Divine likeness. All the life of spirits, all their energy, all their virtue consists, along with the Divine likeness, in simplicity of intention; and they reach their supreme repose above, in simplicity also, i.e. in simplicity of essence.

Spirits possess virtue and the Divine likeness in divers degrees; and in divers degrees, according to their dignity they possess their own essence in

the depth of their own being: but God suffices for all, and all for each; and every spirit, according to the measure of its love, has a manner more or less profound of seeking God in its own depth.

To enjoy God without intermediary this is what the spirit longs for, naturally and supernaturally, with a supreme desire. But even if the Divine union be effected without medium, we must understand that God and the creature can never be confounded; union can never become confusion; the distinction remains for ever inviolable.

JOHN OF RUYSBROECK.

X

Man's Union with his Divine Counterpart.

THEN that thou mayst come into the sweetness of God's love, I set down here the degrees of love, in the which thou shouldst be waxing.

The first degree is called Insuperable; the second, Inseparable; and the third, Singular.

Thy love is Insuperable when nothing may overcome it, that is, neither weal nor woe, joy nor anguish, lust of the flesh nor liking of this world; but ever it lasts in good thought, if it were tempted greatly, and it hates all sin: so that nothing may slacken that love.

Thy love is Inseparable when all thy thoughts and thy wills are gathered together and fastened wholly in Jesus Christ, so that thou mayst at no time forget Him, but ever thinkest on Him. And therefore it is called Inseparable, for it may in naught be separated from the thought of Christ.

Thy love is Singular when all thy delight is in Jesus Christ, and in no other thing finds joy and comfort. In this degree love is as stalwart as death, and as hard as hell. For as death slays

all living things in this world, so perfect love slays in a man's soul all fleshly desires and earthly covetousness. And as hell spares nothing to dead men, but torments all that come thereto, also a man that is in this degree of love, not only forsakes the wretched solace of his life, but also he loves to suffer pain for the love of God. Therefore if thou must love anything, love Jesus Christ, that is the fairest, richest, and wisest, whose love lasts in endless joy. For all earthly love is passing, and wastes soon away. If thou be covetous after God, love Him, and thou shalt have all good. Desire Him truly and thou shalt want nothing. If thou likest delights, love Him, for He gives delights to His lovers that never may perish—but all the delights of this world are faint and false, and fail in the greatest need; they begin in sweetness, but their ending is bitterer than gall.

If thou cannot live without fellowship, lift thy thought to heaven, that thou mayst find comfort with angels and souls, the which will help thee to God, and not hinder thee, as thy fleshly friends do.

RICHARD ROLLE.

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST

THE OUTER COURT

THE INNER SHRINE

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST

THE OUTER COURT

THE simple secret of Mediæval Piety was its inner recognition that Christ restored mankind into a single and immortal Family, thereby giving back to the Race its characteristic "kindness," or sentiment of kind. The Mediæval Cathedral, for instance, was inspired of racial consciousness; its builders were reverentially absorbed rather with the Family of Man's thought of worship, than with their own, as individual men.

It is because this sentiment of a Greater Family of God was often, formerly, rather taken for granted than argued about, that the genius of Catholicity has so often been caricatured by modern writers who overlook its social and fraternal character.

These gathered teachings of the "Outer Court," that is, of the Beginnings of Fellowship, are luminous on account of the manner in which what is written shows that Redemption means the Restoration of the greater Human Family to itself in Christ. They are thus in a sense a living

exemplification of the great spirit of brotherliness in the Religion of Christ. If we are "holy" to Christ we are consecrated to all humanity, without leaving one single man outside. The recognition of the fact that this fundamental Catholic sense of brotherliness was the inspiring genius of Mediæval Religion will fortify our faith when we are striving to believe in the Social Catholic Church which is destined soon to be.

THE OUTER COURT

PART I

CAMEOS OF THE CHRIST LIFE

ST. BONAVENTURE

I

Bearing the Life of Christ within as our Social Destiny.

AMONG the many commendations passed on the virtues and excellence of the holy virgin Cecilia, it is reported of her that she was in the habit of carrying, hidden in her bosom, the Gospel of Christ.

By this we are to understand that she selected from the life of the Lord Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel, some passages which more especially stirred her devotion, upon which she meditated day and night with pure and undivided heart, with attention and earnestness, going over them again and again without leaving out any, and ruminating upon them with sweetness and delight, she laid them up in her inmost heart.

I advise you to adopt the same holy practice.

Above all other things, too, for I believe that in the pursuit of the spiritual life this practice is most necessary and most beneficial, and that which is calculated to lead to a higher state. For nowhere will you find such teaching to arm you against vain and fleeting flatteries, against tribulations and adversities, against the temptations of enemies and vices, as in the life of the Lord Jesus, the life which had no defect and had every perfection.

Indeed, from the frequent and habitual meditation on His Life, the soul is drawn into a certain familiarity, confidence, and love of Him, so that other things are counted worthless and are despised. Moreover, we are thereby strengthened and taught what to do, and what to avoid.

II

From the Saints direct to Christ.

He who follows Christ can neither err nor be deceived; to the imitation and pursuit of Whose virtues the heart is kindled, animated by frequent meditation. At length he is enlightened by virtue and so clothed with it that he discerns truth from falsehood; thus it is that many illiterate persons have become versed in the great and profound mysteries of God.

How, think you, did St. Francis attain to such abundance of virtues, to such deep insight into the meaning of Scripture, to such clear discernment of the illusions of spiritual foes and vices, but from familiar conversation with the mediation upon the Lord Jesus?

Hence it was that he was so ardently attached to the Life of Christ, that his own life became a picture of it. For he imitated it in the practice of all virtues as perfectly as he could; and at length Jesus, it is said, completed and perfected the likeness by the imprint of His Sacred Wounds, so that he became wholly transformed into Him.

You see, then, to what an eminent state the soul attains by meditating on the Life of Christ; and yet this is but, as it were, a foundation upon which it can rise to more sublime degrees of contemplation. For the unction which is found therein by degrees purifies and elevates the soul, and imparts to it all knowledge.

III

The Conversation with the Woman of Samaria.

FROM this account you may note certain beautiful and useful things. And first see the humility of our Lord; how the humble Lord remained quite alone and unattended during the absence of His disciples, for they were on familiar terms with Him; then, how humbly He talked with this unhappy woman by herself, and treated of such great mysteries, and conversed with her as if His equal.

For He did not disdain her, but, on the contrary, He answered her in such a manner as would have been wonderful even if He had been addressing an assembly of the wisest men. The proud do not act thus. For if they pour forth swelling words before a few, much less before one, they regard them as wasted, and count their hearers unworthy of them.

Secondly, consider His poverty and affliction of the body, and the humility which accompanied them. For here you are told how the disciples went away to the city to seek bread, and, having obtained it, how they brought it to Him and

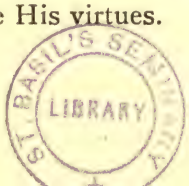
wanted Him to eat. But where did He eat? No doubt at the well, or by some river or spring.

See, then, how He refreshed Himself, wearied and famished as He was. And do not imagine that this was the only occasion when He so acted, but His general custom.

Whence you can plainly conclude that the humble Lord and lover of poverty often took His meals in the open air, outside dwellings of men, by some stream or spring, however tired or prostrated He might be. He was provided with no dainty food, no fine cups, no delicate wines, but with pure water from the spring or river.

He Who caused the vineyards to be fertile, Who created the springs, and all that move in the waters, sat humbly on the ground, and took His meals as any poor man.

In the third place, consider how intent He was on spiritual things. For when His disciples invited Him to eat, He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." Nor would He eat until He had received the people who came from the city and preached to them, desirous of first attending to the needs of the soul before taking bodily refreshment, though He stood so greatly in need of it. Behold Him, then, in all the actions which have been mentioned, and strive to imitate His virtues.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IV

Descending to and Ascending with humanity.

He descended from the height of power, when He clothed Himself with the weakness of our flesh; He descended from the summit of knowledge, when it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

For what can seem more weak than the little tender body and limbs of an infant? What more void of knowledge than a babe who knows only the mother's breasts?

Who is more powerless than He Whose limbs are all nailed to the cross, Whose bones may all be counted? Who more foolish than He Who poured out His soul unto death, and paid the things that He never took?

Do you see, then, how He, Who so deeply descended, emptied Himself of all His power and all His wisdom? But He could not ascend higher into the mount of goodness, nor more forcibly commend His charity.

Nor is it a wonder that Christ by descending ascended, when both the others by ascending fell.

St. Bernard says: "Therefore, my dearly beloved, persevere in the discipline which you have received, that by humility you may ascend to sublimity; because this is the way, and there is no other beside it. He who tries any other road falls rather than ascends; for it is humility alone which ascends, and which exalts, and this only it is which leads to life."

And again: "O perversity, O ambition of the sons of Adam. Because when it is most difficult to ascend, but most easy to descend, they ascend with care, and descend with much difficulty, being ever ready for honours, for the highest posts, it may be, ecclesiastical dignities—formidable even for the shoulders of angels to bear. But to follow Thee, Lord Jesus, scarcely any one is found, any one who will suffer himself to be drawn, or desires to be led along the way of Thy commandments."

V

Prayer, the Solidarity of the Greater Healing.

After the disciples had entered into the ship, Christ Himself went up into the mountain, and there He continued in prayer till the fourth watch of the night; that is, until three-quarters of the night had passed, and the fourth only remained. Whence you see how long our Lord continued in prayer through the night, and it is often recorded that He thus gave Himself to prayer. Behold Him, then, how He prays, and humbles Himself before the Father. He searches our solitary places, and goes along to them; He afflicts Himself, and keeps long watches. The faithful Shepherd intercedes for His sheep; for He prays not for Himself, but for us, as our Advocate and Mediator with the Father. He prays, also, to give us an example of prayer.

VI

Joy with Christ is joy with the Greater Commonwealth.

Does he not possess all things, to whom all things work together for good? Hath he not the hundred-fold of all, who is filled with the Holy Spirit, who hath Christ in his heart? Hath he not much more than an hundred-fold, who hath the visitation of the Spirit, the Comforter, and the presence of Christ?

O Lord, how great is the multitude of Thy sweetness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, and which Thou hast wrought for them that hope in Thee! See, how the holy soul breaks forth with the remembrance of the abundant sweetness, and labours to express it by multiplying words. "How great," he says, "is the multitude!"

This "hundred-fold," then, is the adoption of sons, the freedom and firstfruits of the spirit of a delightful charity, the glory of conscience, the kingdom of God which is within us. Not, indeed, "meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Joy, truly, not only in the hope of future glory, but also amid present trial. This is the fire which Christ willed that it should be vehemently kindled. This is the virtue which made Andrew embrace the cross, a Lawrence despise his executioners, a Stephen, at his death, pray for those who stoned him.

This is that peace which Christ left to His own, when He gave it as His peace; for "grace and mercy is to His saints"—the peace, indeed, of the Father, and the pledge of future glory. This peace passeth all understanding, and whatever there is of pleasure under the sun, whatever to be desired in this world, can bear no comparison to it.

This is the grace of devotion, and the unction which knoweth all things, which whoso experienceth, knoweth; and whoso hath not experienced, knoweth not: which none can know, except he hath received it.

VII

Martha and Mary.

One day the Lord Jesus went to Bethany, to the house of Martha and Mary, who loved Him with all their heart, and received Him with all reverence and with great joy. Martha, the sister of Mary, for her part, was occupied in preparing a banquet as honourable as possible for our Lord and His disciples. But Mary sat at the feet of our Lord.

And when our Lord, Who could never be idle, spake to her, as His manner was, the words of eternal life, she, with eyes and ears intent upon Him, was delighted with His conversation beyond expression ; neither thought she of anything else. Martha, then, was pained at her seeming want of consideration, and bade our Lord compel her to take part in the preparations with which she was herself so much occupied. But our Lord was not of her opinion, and Martha was told that Mary had chosen the best part.

Now Mary, who had been absorbed in her Lord's words, awoke, as it were, to a sense of her

sister's vexation like one startled out of sleep, and turning her face towards the ground, remained silent. But after our Lord's reply to Martha, Mary rested more securely and more sweetly than ever.

Then, the repast being ready, and our Lord ceasing to speak, she arose at once and brought Him water for His hands, and henceforth sitting near Him, served Him most attentively. Behold, then, our Lord entering the house, see with what intense joy they receive Him; and dwell, as we have before prescribed, upon every act, for every feature of this event is most beautiful.

VIII

Teaching and Practising Fellowship.

BEHOLD Him, then, as He speaks, how efficaciously, how earnestly, how sweetly, He addresses them, impressing on the minds of His disciples what He says and regaling them with the tenderness of His looks and words. Behold, too, the disciples, how mournfully they droop their heads and weep and draw long sighs, filled to the full with sadness, as the Truth itself bears witness: "Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart."

But, amongst the rest, observe John, in close communion with Jesus; with what attention and eagerness He regards His Beloved, and with tender anxiety gathers up His every word. For St. John alone has handed down to us a record of these things.

Amongst other things, the Lord Jesus said to them, "Arise, let us go hence." Oh, what fear took possession of them, not knowing whither they went or how they were to go, and fearing above all else that they would be separated from

Him; nevertheless, He did not at that moment conclude, but continued His discourse, and then went on with it along the way.

See, then, the disciples going after Him and with Him, each one drawing as close to Him as he could, gathering together like a flock, first one and then the other pressing forward with the desire of touching Him and hearing His words, while He willingly suffered this from them.

IX

An Emblem of our Discipleship.

When two of the disciples were going towards a village called Emmaus, despairing and sad, as they conversed upon all that had happened, the Lord Jesus drew near, and, as a stranger, joined Himself to them and journeyed with them, entering into conversation, asking them questions and replying to their inquiries, and giving them wholesome instructions, as is recorded in the Gospel. At length, constrained by them, He went in with them and manifested Himself to them.

Give heed to all that happened, and consider the goodness and kindness of our Lord. First, in that His ardent love was unable to endure that they should thus wander and be sad. Truly, as a faithful friend, a constant companion, the benign Lord joins Himself to them, seeks the cause of their sadness, and expounds to them the Scriptures, inflaming their hearts and cleansing them from all the rust of their corrupt nature.

And this He fain would do daily with us. When we are weighed down with trouble or over-

come with weariness, if we speak of Him, He will comfort and illuminate our hearts and inflame them with His love; for the best remedy for such disorders is to turn at once to God.

Wherefore the Prophet says: "O how sweet are Thy words unto my throat; yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth." And again: "Thy word is tried to the uttermost, and Thy servant loveth it." And thus, of meditating upon God, the same Prophet says: "My heart was hot within me; and while I was thus musing, the fire kindled."

Secondly, consider the goodness of our Lord, not only expressed in love, but in deep humility. Behold Him, with what lowliness He walks with them. Do you not see He still adheres to the principles of lowliness? He has left us an example that we may imitate Him.

He did not disdain those disciples who were of a lower degree, but joins them, and enters into familiar converse with them. The world would act very differently; they would choose out the chief and the rich, and would only make companions of such.

In another way, too, His humility is manifest. For the proud do not like to expend grand sayings amongst a few; but our Lord with two reveals His sacred things: He despises not a few, no not even one, for He once talked with the woman of Samaria.

PART II

THE DISCIPLINE OF OUR CHRISTLINESS TO ALL MEN

DR. JOHN TAULER

I

The Heavenly Secret of the Earthly Commonwealth.

"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."
Matt. XI. 29.

CHRIST, our blessed Lord, the true master and teacher of all art and virtue, and a pattern of all perfection, when He came down from heaven to instruct us poor ignorant men, did not see fit to make use of great subtleties, or mysterious and ingenious statements of truth; but in short, plain simple words, He delivered to us a maxim, and gave us a very short easy lesson, which we were well able to learn. Now this stood written in the book of His holy humanity, in large, distinct letters, easy to be read, and runs thus: "Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."

What shorter, easier, more intelligible lesson

could be set us? But we must give our minds with willing industry to read it over and over again attentively, and practise it in our life, ever looking to the admirable model of the divine humanity of Christ, Whose whole life was not only meek and humble, but Whose words, ways, walk, and all that He ever did, are simply the illustration of this doctrine. Hence He chose at the beginning such scholars and disciples as were specially fitted to learn this doctrine, and these were the holy apostles and His blessed mother, who said, when she had conceived Him, "He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.' Thus He says in the Gospel: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent" (that is from the proud), "and hath revealed them unto babes" (that is, to the humble).

From this we gather that none but the humble are able to receive the hidden things of God.

II

Fellowship with God's Creatures leads us to Fellowship with God's Creatorship, which by this leading may be brought to bear on us.

CHRIST is a Master of the Highest Truth, and therefore we ought to contemplate Him. Here take note that thou canst contemplate God in His creatures, which He has made out of nothing, whereby thou art able to discover His omnipotence.

But when thou seest and considerest how admirably the creatures are fashioned and put together, and in what wonderful order they are arranged, thou art able to perceive and trace the Wisdom of God, which is ascribed to the Son. And when further thou comest to perceive the gentleness of the creatures, and how all creatures have something loving in them, then thou perceivest the lovingkindness of the Holy Spirit.

Thus St. Paul tells the Romans that men are able to behold the invisible goodness of God through the things that they can see; that is to say, the creatures which He has made. We are

also able to perceive God by the light of grace, as the prophet says: "Lord, in Thy light shall we see the light"; that is, God Himself; for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness anywhere."

Moreover we shall at the last behold God in the light of His glory, and there shall we see Him without a veil, bright as He is; for He is a Master of Truth, Who giveth us to know all truth.

In the third place, Christ is a Master of Perfection; wherefore a man shall leave all things to follow Him, for in God he shall find all things united in one perfectness which are scattered abroad among the creatures.

Therefore, O man, if thou wilt be perfect, be a follower of Christ. He says: "Whoso will not forsake father and mother, and sisters and brothers, and all that he hath, cannot be My disciple." For father and mother, and sisters and brothers, and all creatures are a man's enemies if they keep him back from God and hinder him from treading the straight path to eternal blessedness.

Therefore forsake the creatures, and follow after the Master of Perfection, even Jesus Christ, blessed for ever. May He grant us by His grace to do so! Amen.

III

Since Christ, as it were, summed up the future of human spiritual history, He, in like manner, came from our future, and leads us thither.

Now let us meditate how Christ has gone before us into the glory of His heavenly Father. Therefore, if we desire to follow Him, we must mark the way which He has shewn us and trodden for three and thirty years, in misery, in poverty, in shame, and in bitterness, even unto death.

So likewise, to this day, must we follow in the same path, if we would fain enter with Him into the Kingdom of Heaven. For though all our masters were dead, and all our books burned, yet we should ever find instruction enough in His holy life.

For He Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and by no other way can we truly and undeviatingly advance towards the same consummation, than in that which He hath walked as our Exemplar, while He was yet upon earth.

Now, as the loadstone draws the iron after itself, so doth Christ draw all hearts after Himself which

have once been touched by Him ; and as when the iron is impregnated with the energy of the loadstone that has touched it, it follows the stone uphill, although that is contrary to its nature, and cannot rest in its own proper place, but strives to rise above itself on high ; so all the souls which have been touched by this loadstone, Christ, can neither be chained down by joy or grief, but are ever rising up to God out of themselves.

They forget their own nature, and follow after the touch of God, and follow it the more easily and directly, the more noble is their nature than that of other men, and the more they are touched by God's finger.

IV

Leading the world towards Brotherliness, the Social Paradise.

St. Paul tells us that we must be careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Children, that peace which is found in the spirit and the inner life is well worth our care, for in that peace lies the satisfaction of all our wants.

In it the kingdom of God is discovered and His righteousness is found. This peace a man should allow nothing to take from him, whatever betide, come weal or woe, honour or shame. But ever keep thy inward man in the bond of peace, which consists in the common love of all to all; and set before you the lovely example of our Lord Jesus Christ, and see how His love wrought, leading Him to endure greater sufferings than all the saints or all mankind ever endured.

For He was all His life more utterly destitute of consolation than any man ever was, and ended it by the bitterest death that man ever died; and yet in His highest powers He was never less blessed than He is at this moment.

Now, those who are most truly followers of Him in emptiness of outward consolation, and in true poverty, inward and outward, having no refuge or stay, and in no wise clinging to the creature or seeking themselves, these come to discover, in the truest and noblest sort, the kingdom of God.

And this is God's righteousness, that He will give us to find His kingdom by treading in Christ's footsteps, in true self-surrender and willing poorness of spirit. That we may all so see the kingdom of God as truly to find it, may He help us. Amen.

V

The discipline which will make men into "Social Christs."

In two things man must become like unto our Lord Jesus Christ. First, in perfect obedience to His heavenly Father, even unto death; secondly, he must persevere and grow in obedience and in all virtues unto his life's end.

By these means the heart is made pure and heavenly, and the man becomes of one mind with God through deep humility, free self-surrender, patient longsuffering, true poorness of spirit, and fervent love to God. And all who do verily seek the kingdom of God (of whom, alas! how few is the number) do prevail against their foes, and God delivers them from their heavy burdens, and helps them to bear all their afflictions. For He lays upon them much suffering of many kinds, but the righteous God does this to the intent that four ends may be accomplished in them.

The first, that they may come to themselves, and see whence their trouble cometh, and that their thoughts may be turned upon themselves by reason of the pain, and so be fixed.

The second, that they may examine why God has laid the burden of pain upon them ; and when they perceive God's purpose in their sufferings let them strive to fulfil that, and resign themselves wholly to His divine will.

The third, that they may come out of themselves and from all creatures.

The fourth, that they may learn true patience under diverse afflictions.

But what is true patience under affliction? Is it to remain unmoved by outward things? No. True patience is that a man should feel in his inmost soul, and in utter sincerity thus judge, that no one could or might do him a real injustice, but always remember that he is receiving no worse than his deserts, for he might justly have far more to suffer and endure, insomuch that he may feel nothing but gentleness and compassion toward all who do him wrong.

Such men are followers of Christ, our humble Master, in whom He reigns, and to whom He said, "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed ; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

VI

The entire brotherhood is first to be sought for within the heart.

LET a man be at home in his own heart, and cease from his restless chase of and search after outward things. If he is thus at home while on earth, he will surely come to see what there is to do at home—what God commands him inwardly without means, and also outwardly by the help of means; and then let him surrender himself, and follow God along whatever path his loving Lord thinks fit to lead him, whether it be to contemplation or action, to usefulness or enjoyment, whether in sorrow or in joy, let him follow on.

And if God do not give him thus to feel His hand in all things, let him still simply yield himself up, and go without for God's sake, out of love, and still press forward, setting ever before him the lovely example of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, Who did all His works for three ends:—

The first was, that in all His doings He sought the glory of His heavenly Father only, and not His own in any matter, whether great or small, and committed all things into His hands again.

The second was, that with His whole heart He purposed and sought the salvation and blessedness of men that He might lay hold on all men, and bring them to the acknowledgment of His name, according to the words of St. Paul: "God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

The third end which He kept in view in all His words, and works, and life, was that He might give us a true example and model of a perfect life in its highest form.

The men who thus tread in His steps do become, in very truth, the noblest and most glorious of their race, and those who are thus born again into His life are the rich and costly jewels of the Holy Christian Church, and in all ages they work out the highest good, while they look not to the greatness or the meanness of their work, nor to their success nor failure, but look only to the will of God in all things; and for this cause all their works are the best that may be.

Neither do they look whether God will place them high or low, for the only thing they care for is that in all things alike God's will may be done. God grant that it may be true with each of us. Amen.

Part III

THE PATTERN OF THE NEW AND ALL-EMBRACING COMMONWEALTH

J. MERLO HORSTIUS, Etc.

I

"Christ is proposed for our imitation."

God the Father. In the beginning I created man upright; that is, to My own image and likeness. But he understood not when he was in honour; and he who had been created to participate in the Divine nature was compared to the senseless beasts, and became like them.

This is the first man, Adam, who, for transgressing My commandment, was cast out of Paradise, and became guilty of death and perdition.

And most unhappily indeed has he been imitated by all those who are descended from him by natural generation, and have become partakers of his guilt and punishment.

But the death of hapless man is not My will, nor do I delight in the perdition of the sinner.

Nay, I so loved the world that I gave My only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting.

This is the second man, from heaven heavenly, Who led on earth, not an earthly, but a heavenly life. He it is, therefore, Whom I have given for a guide and teacher to the Gentiles, that whosoever follows Him might not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

This is, as it were, the living pattern and prototype Whom I have sent from heaven and have displayed adorned in perfect beauty with all virtues, graces, and endowments, that all might endeavour to imitate it; whom I have foreknown and predestined to be made conformable to the image of My Son, that they too may be themselves joint-heirs with Him of My kingdom.

The first man was of the earth, earthly; the second man from heaven, heavenly. Therefore, as you have borne the image of the earthly by transgressing My commandments, like Adam, your first parent, so bear the image of the heavenly by following the example of Christ, and serving Me in holiness and justice all the days of your life.

Look upon Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, Who, having set joy before Him, endures the Cross, despising the shame.

Behold, He is beautiful above the sons of men, and in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead,

not in shadow, but corporally. This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased ; hear Him and follow Him.

Wouldst thou please Me? strive to imitate Him ; the more thou art like Him, the dearer to Me wilt thou be. Nay more, as Isaac blessed Jacob only when arrayed in the garments of his first-born, so too shalt thou receive from Me no blessing, unless thou art clad with the fleece of the spotless Lamb ; that is, with the garments or virtues of My only-begotten Son.

Therefore, cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light ; nay, put on Jesus Christ. Look upon the pattern that I have shewn thee, and copy it in thy actions ; walk before Me by the way that My Beloved has preceded thee, when He was seen upon earth and conversed with men, and gave you an example, that you also should do as He has done.

II

"The Character of a Christian."

THE character of a Christian appears, not from his name, but from his life. Glorious indeed is the profession of that name; but it will be of no avail to eternal glory, unless there be holiness of life to correspond with a name so holy.

The life of Christ, moreover, should be our rule to live by. But now there are many who take the name of Christians, but are little careful to lead a life worthy of that name; and yet they presumptuously hope that they shall be partakers in Christ's glory, though they make no effort to be His followers in His life or on the way.

Oh, how many, who in name only are Christians, are deluded by this hope, or rather presumption! who are either so indolent, or so ignorant, as not to know that a name so holy should be the spur to a more holy life, and that we should wish rather to be, than to be called, Christians.

What is to be done? Behold, our mirror is the life of Christ. Look upon it, O Christian! and

compare with it thy own; and because what is straight is the rule both of itself and of what is crooked, observe in it its great beauty and its different virtues, and the stains and vices in thy own, that are, however, the easier to be washed out, the more diligently thou consultest thy spotless mirror.

Keep, then, thy eyes ever fixed upon it, and meditate day and night upon the life of Christ, that thou mayest learn the faults of thy own life and the virtues of Christ's, and conceive hatred for the one, and love, with longing desire to imitate it, for the other.

For meditation produces knowledge, enlightens the understanding, excites the affection, and inflames the will. But of that which is unknown there is no desire; what wonder, then, if Christ has but few to imitate Him? Can it be both distasteful to meditate on the life of Christ, and a pleasure to imitate it?

III

"Christ's Humility and Meekness to be imitated."

CHRIST. If thou wouldst have Me live in thee, make My life the rule and pattern for the formation of thy life and conduct. But, first, be very diligent in reflecting on My own Passion, in which all the virtues shine forth the more brightly, like roses among the thorns.

Look Who I was, and what I did. For when I was in the form of God, equal with God, not by robbery, but by nature, in glory and majesty, I emptied Myself by taking the form of a servant.

And I came not to be ministered to, but to minister. And shall man presume any more to magnify himself upon earth? Shall he still walk in great matters, and in wonderful things above him? Behold Me prostrate at My disciples' feet, washing them, and wiping them; and why, but to give you an example that you should also do as I have done?

Why then, O dust and ashes, art thou proud? Why, O children of men, do you presume to lift your heart on high? Why do you love the first seats at table and assemblies? Why contest so greatly which of you is to appear to be the greatest?

But rather learn of Me, not to make the world,

not raise the dead, nor to give sight to the blind, nor work other wonders, but because I am meek and humble of heart.

I was not ignorant of My betrayer's treachery, and yet when he approached to kiss My face, I turned it not away, but the face in which no deceit was found I applied lovingly to that which abounded with evil, saying, "Friend, whereto art thou come?"

And does it seem to thee a hard, or troublesome thing, to be the first to exhibit marks and tokens of humility, or to utter words of meekness in the presence of thy enemy?

MAN. True it is, most humble Jesus, that Thou hast taught humility from Thy birth even to Thy death. And surely the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant greater than his lord.

Why, therefore, should one that is unprofitable like myself, be ashamed to become, after Thy example, humble and low? or how can I presume to walk henceforth in great matters or in wonderful things that are above me?

Oh that I may always choose to be an abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners, and to humble myself, O Lord, with Thee, that I may merit likewise to be exalted with Thee in the day of visitation. For I know that Thou resistest the proud, and givest grace only to the humble.

IV

"Christ the Way of Life, by our keeping His Commandments."

CHRIST. Wouldst thou know the way? Behold, I am the way, the truth, and the life: the way, in being thy example; the truth, in giving thee My promise; the life, in being thy reward. He that follows Me walks not in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

I have given you an example, that you should follow My steps; that, as I have done, you should do also.

Look into My life, therefore, and do according to the pattern which was shewn thee on the mount; that is, learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart; for I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me; nay, I became obedient to God the Father unto death, even unto the death of the cross.

Go, then, also, My son, and do in like manner. Be humble and obedient; and if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

Now, the first and greatest commandment is,

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and the second, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

He that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me. For the proof of love is the performance of duty.

MAN. Lord, whither shall I go away from Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Thy testimonies are exceedingly trustworthy.

Blessed is the man whom Thou instructest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law.

Shew me Thy ways, and teach me Thy paths, lead me into the path of Thy commandments, for this I have desired, and remove from me the way of iniquity.

CHRIST. Hear My words, for they are spirit and life. It is I Who teach thee what is profitable.

Blessed is the man who hears Me and keeps My words. But all men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God.

Behold, by precepts few and easy, I will instruct thee in this way in which thou shalt go.

I will lead thee by the paths of equity, which when thou shalt have entered, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not meet the stumbling-block.

Hearken, then, diligently to My words, and lay them up in thy heart. For if thou wilt keep My commandments, they will keep thee.

MAN. Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth. But give me also understanding that I may learn Thy commandments, and keep them with my whole heart.

Teach me to do Thy will, for thou art my God; that I may not deserve to be beaten with many stripes, as a servant who knows, but does not, the will of his Lord.

V

"To follow Christ is glorious, pleasant, and profitable."

CHRIST. Strive at least to follow afar off, and to press towards the prize of thy high vocation that is destined for thee. Behold with what industry the children of this world seek riches, wealth, and honours; with what patience they strive to conform themselves to the world, to please men; how anxious they are by their services to catch at the recompense of princes and the favour of the powerful!

With what cheerfulness and daring do soldiers expose their lives under the eye of their leader, and fearlessly rush into every kind of danger! Yet what is the reward of them all, great as have been their labours and toils?

What but a morsel of earth, wind, and smoke, vanity and affliction of spirit? For all things pass away like a shadow, and there is nothing under the sun that continues in the same state. Surely thou canst serve and please Me with less toil, gain heaven and eternity with less pains, and wilt thou neglect it?

Why, then, thou children of men, why do you love vanity and seek after lying? Know ye that the Lord has made wonderful His Holy One; I mean He has distinguished Myself by so many endowments and virtues, that My life might be a mirror and example to you; therefore follow Me.

Why do you walk the difficult ways of the world, or of the flesh? Behold, destruction and unhappiness are in the ways of sinners; but My ways are fair ways, My yoke too is sweet, and My burden light.

It is I that make the crooked ways straight, and the rough ways plain. The wandering I bring back, the toilworn I refresh, and those that persevere I crown.

Therefore if any man minister unto Me, let him follow Me. It is a great glory to follow the Lord; for where I am, there also shall My minister be; and he shall possess the kingdom that has been prepared for him from the beginning of the world, whose glory couldst thou but know, nothing would be heavy for thee to do or to suffer; and the days of thy labours would seem to thee few, because of the greatness of thy desire and of thy love.

For My kingdom suffers violence, and the violent bear it away. Now to offer violence to heaven is to lose thy own life, to overcome thy

own self, and the evil impulses of thy own mind, and to crush the desires of the flesh. To one who loves surely this is no difficult thing; nay, it will become pleasant, especially if at the same time he looks to the recompense, for the hope of reward is the consolation of toil.

But be it that it is laborious, wilt thou, therefore, refuse it? Dost thou desire to sit with Me also in My kingdom, and wilt thou not drink of the cup which I have drunk of?

Wilt thou presume to be the soldier of Christ, yet dread the hardships which thy captain embraces? Thou are deceived, if thou expectest to pass from pleasures to pleasures, to rejoice here with the world, and hereafter to rejoice with Me in heaven. Without a contest, not one of the Saints have been crowned.

Look upon Me: was it necessary that I should suffer, and so enter into My own glory? and shalt thou without toil and suffering, enter into another's glory? Act, then, courageously, and endure patiently; short and momentary is the labour, but lasting and eternal the reward.

VI

"What we learn from the name of Christian."

CHRIST. Dost thou wish to please Me, my son? Then follow Me; this will please Me much. Nothing is more just, as well as more acceptable to a father, than to be followed by his son. Be therefore a follower of Me, as a most dear son. Why art thou called, thinkest thou, by My Name, if it be not that thou mayest follow My steps? Woe to those who bear so glorious a name idly and unworthily; who are called, I say, and are not Christians; who with their mouth say that they know Me, but deny Me in their deeds.

So little care do very many take to follow Me, or conduct themselves like true Christians! Better indeed would it have been for such not to have known My faith, which is the way of truth, than, when it was known, to have held it in injustice. Alas! how sad it is for Me to see My Name and My mark everywhere so profaned.

Besides, if every one who says that he abides in Me ought himself also to walk even as I walk, much more inexcusable are those who say that

they abide for Me, and who discharge an embassage for Me, that is, are dispensers of the Mysteries of God, and My Ministers, if they do not follow Me.

But now, those who should have Me the most closely are often My bitterest persecutors, and they who eat My bread greatly supplant Me. How is it that My beloved work much wickedness in My house? How is it, that even among them, no less than among the children of this world, reign envying and contention, pride and ambition, avarice and gluttony, luxury and pride?

Are not these the works of the flesh and of darkness? But I am the true light, and he that follows Me does not walk in darkness. What concord has Christ with Belial? light with darkness? and thinkest thou that they deserve to be enrolled under My Name, and to share My lot, or are rightly called the children of light, who love darkness rather than light?

If similarity of conduct is what indeed produces and preserves friendship, how can I call those My friends who, in their conduct, are so unlike Myself? Can I acknowledge them for My disciples who hate My discipline, and cast My words behind them? Shall they be My Ministers who say, "Lord, Lord," and do not the things which I say?

VII

"How we are to imitate the wonderful patience of Christ."

CHRIST. Blessed indeed is the man who has the Lord for his God. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

What, then, can he want who has Him Who has all things for his friend? The less a man cleaves to these earthly goods, the more he will abound in the eternal.

Therefore, if thou too abandon all things, in affection at least, and follow Me, thou shalt receive a hundred-fold, and shall possess eternal life.

But if thou wouldst follow Me, thou must also prepare thy soul for temptation; for all that will live godly in Me must suffer persecution.

For how shall a crown be given to one who has not fulfilled the conditions of the contest? Look at Me, the pattern of all patience. Let but My passion be called to mind, and there is nothing that may not be patiently endured.

Think, then, what, and how greatly, I have suffered, and whatever thou sufferest will become light.

For, not to speak of the very heavy pains and agonies that I sustained in My body, think only of the insults, injuries, and reproaches of My revilers, that fell upon Me ; and for what desert of mine? I healed the sick, fed the hungry, gave sight to the blind ; I went about doing good and healing all ; I did amongst them works that no other man did.

And which of them could convict Me of sin? Not one ; and yet they sharpened their tongues against Me like a sword. Hence I was called a glutton and a wine-drinker, a blasphemer, the son of a carpenter, one who cast out by the prince of the devils, one who had a devil, a seducer and seditious person, a Samaritan and friend of publicans ; nay, I was reputed with the wicked, esteemed guilty of death, and worse than a robber ; made the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people.

And all this I suffered, to leave you an example, that you might follow My footsteps. Why, then, O men, do you weep, why do you sigh, when perchance you have to bear with injurious words? Think diligently what opposition I suffered from sinners against Myself, that you may not be wearied, and grow faint-hearted.

Have I thus had opposers and contradicters, and would you wish all to be your friends and benefactors? Where will your patience meet with

its crown, if no adversity is to put it to the test? Surely, if I, when innocent and undefiled in all things, was nevertheless exposed to envy and calumny, it was to teach you that it is in vain for you to seek to be free from them here. I was to suffer, and so to enter into My glory.

VIII

"The sovereign charity of Christ to be most admired and imitated."

CHRIST. But in and above all this, consider especially the love with which I have desired and consummated the work of your salvation. So great was this love that the many waters of grief and affliction could not overwhelm it.

My Father, for your sakes, spared not even His own and only Son, nor did I spare Myself. Yes, I loved you to the end, and, as a good Shepherd, laid down My life for My sheep; but greater love than this has no man, that he lay down his life for his friends.

MAN. Nay, Lord, Thou hadst greater, in laying it down even for Thy enemies. For while we were still Thy enemies, we were reconciled by Thy death both to Thee and to Thy Father.

Can it be thought that any other love is, or has been, or will be like this? Scarcely for a just man will one die; but in dying for our sins Thou hast suffered for the unjust.

It is Thou Who camest to justify sinners freely,

to make slaves Thy brethren, captives Thy co-heirs, exiles kings. Is there, O Jesus, one that is not heated by Thy love, which gives heat and light to all things.

For its going out is from the end of heaven, and there is no one that can hide himself from its heat. The very publicans too and sinners Thou rejectest not, but receivest them, and eatest with them.

And to the very enemies, who seek to inflict upon Thee injuries, insults, and death itself, Thou strivest to do good. Oh, strange are the wonders which Thou hast done upon earth!

IX

"The One true Good."

Of a truth we ought to know and believe that there is no life so noble and good and well pleasing to God as the life of Christ, and yet it is to nature and selfishness the bitterest life.

A life of carelessness and freedom is to nature and the Self and the Me the sweetest and pleasantest life, but it is not the best, and in some men may become the worst. But though Christ's life be the most bitter of all, yet it is to be preferred above all. Hereby shall ye mark this: There is an inward sight which hath power to perceive the One true Good, and that it is neither this nor that, but that of which St. Paul said: "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. xiii. 10).

By this he meaneth, that the Whole and Perfect excelleth all the fragments, and that all which is in part and imperfect is as naught compared to the Perfect. Thus likewise all knowledge of the parts is swallowed up when the Whole is known; and where that Good is known, it cannot

but be longed for and loved so greatly, that all other love wherewith the man hath loved himself and other things, fadeth away.

And that inward sight likewise perceiveth what is best and noblest in all things, and loveth it in the One true Good, and only for the sake of that true Good.

Behold! where there is this inward sight, the man perceiveth of a truth, that Christ's life is the best and noblest life, and therefore the most to be preferred, and he willingly accepted and endureth it, without a question or a complaint, whether it please or offend nature or other men, whether he like or dislike it, find it sweet or bitter and the like.

And therefore, wherever this perfect and true Good is known, there also the life of Christ must be led until the death of the body. And he who vainly thinketh otherwise is deceived, and he who saith otherwise lieth, and in what man the life of Christ is not, of the true Good and eternal Truth will nevermore be known.

THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

X

Following Christ into the innermost Risen Life only through an equal endurance.

THERE be some who affirm that a man, while in this present time, may and ought to be above being touched by outward things, and in all respects as Christ was after His resurrection. This they try to prove and establish by Christ's words: "I go before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Me" (Matt. XXVI. 32; XXVIII. 7, 10). And again: "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have" (Luke XXIV. 39).

These sayings they interpret thus: "As ye have seen Me, and been followers of Me, in My mortal body and life, so also it behoveth you to see Me and follow Me as I go before you into Galilee; that is to say, into a state in which nothing hath power to move or grieve the soul; on which state ye shall enter, and live and continue therein, before that ye have suffered and gone through your bodily death. And as ye see Me having flesh and bones, and not liable to suffer, so shall ye likewise, while yet in the body and having your mortal nature, cease to feel

outward things, were it even the death of the body."

Now, I answer, in the first place, to this affirmation, that Christ did not mean that a man should or could attain unto this state, unless he have first gone through and suffered all that Christ did. Now, Christ did not attain thereunto before He had passed through and suffered His natural death and what things appertain thereto. Therefore no man can or ought to come to it so long as he is mortal and liable to suffer.

For if such a state were the noblest and best, and if it were possible and right to attain to it, as aforesaid, in this present time, then it would have been attained by Christ; for the life of Christ is the best and noblest, the worthiest and loveliest in God's sight that ever was or will be.

Therefore, if it was not and could not be so with Christ, it will never be so with any man. Therefore, though some may imagine and say that such a life is the best and noblest life, yet it is not so.

THEOLOGIA GERMANICA.

XI

The waiting for and expecting an invisible fellowship.

I AM indeed the resurrection and the life: I am the living bread which came down from heaven, and I give life to the world. I am the good pastor Who feeds My simple and obedient sheep, who abandon their own will in all things and follow Mine.

I am the hidden manna, the joy of the angels, the Christian passover, and the saints' felicity, rejoicing the angels in heaven with My clear vision, and communicating men on earth with My holy sacrament.

Be not troubled, therefore, although the world despise you; be not discontented and sad, as if you were forsaken of God; be not in fear and apprehension, as though your enemies compassed you round about. I have not forsaken you hitherto, nor will I hereafter forsake you. I have not yet, nor will I henceforth cast you off.

But I will support you in all good things and conduct you through sundry temptations; and I will purge and try you as gold in the fire. In the time of tribulation I will appear unto you and

comfort you with My presence ; by infusing grace into your soul, by giving you the wine of compunction to drink, and anointing you with the oil of gladness, that you may shed tears and feel a wonderful sweetness, that so you may be set on fire and melt away. Thus will I comfort those that bewail Me in upon their own hearts.

I have a care of you, and My eyes are fixed upon My faithful that they may sit with Me in the kingdom of My heavenly Father and see the splendour thereof, which I possessed from all eternity and prepared for My friends. I will bestow an overflowing reward upon them when they rise from the dead glorious and incorruptible. For this cause I suffered a cruel death, broke open the gates of hell, I subdued the devil, I delivered the holy fathers out of limbus, I opened heaven's gates ; to the end I might bring the elect to eternal beatitude.

But esteem not yourselves shut out from this joy, nor to be a stranger to the happy society of the saints. For though you be yet clothed with mortality and live amidst temptations, yet shall you hereafter enjoy My vision, if you remain faithful and constant in following My footsteps, as I remained in the love of My Father by My obedience.

Be therefore courageous in temptation and patient in all tribulation, that you may be partakers of My eternal glory. Despair not, whatever ad-

versity may seem to threaten you, or human consolation forsake you.

My manner is not to pass by the mournful, nor to despise those that pray, but mercifully to hear those that call upon Me with a contrite heart. I try those that fight, and will crown such as persevere to the end.

I suffer My beloved to be afflicted for a short time, and whilst she least thinks of it, and conceives herself unworthy of all consolation, I suddenly appear and enlighten the ignorant. Thus I did with My disciples and the holy women who visited My sepulchre, for they were in great sorrow and sadness: they had lost all hope, they had no comfort, they were ignorant what to do or whither to go.

In the meantime their greatest delight and consolation was to weep bitterly, and earnestly to inquire whether they might be able to hear any tidings of Me.

And behold, when all human assistance failed, Divine aid was present with them, and they met with more happiness than they could have imagined. For I first sent My angels out to bring them good tidings lest they might remain any longer disconsolate, that being raised up into the hope of eternal life they might expect the king of glory.

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST

THE INNER SHRINE

REMEMBER that by the rules of Mystical Science Ruysbroeck's "Mystical Sun" is the refound face of Christ new for each succeeding age. Hence it means to the present the "countenance of Christ" to interpret and heal the peoples, and to bring to pass the paradise of Social Justice which the present world desires.

In like manner, as the "Beloved," to Thomas à Kempis, meant the Christ whose face countenanced the earthly Christ-life of the Brothers of the Common Life; and as the "Lover" meant the soul desiring to be impressed with Social Christliness; so, to the present reader, the portrait of the "Beloved" must be filled in with the likeness of the "Christ Who is To Be," and the "Lover" must stand for every heart striving for that faith in the Presence which is able to fill the social universe with Christliness.

The paradoxical truth about the Fellowship of

the Inner Shrine with Christ is that this fellowship of inner experience brings us nearer to the heart of all humanity and outer brotherliness than any merely external religion. Objection is sometimes taken to the use of terms of endearment such as "Lover" and "Beloved" in dealing with religion. But whoever objects to these terms objects to the essence of religion itself; since religion is the primary actuality of innermost love; and the loves of husband and wife, as St. Paul taught, can only strive to reach their proper ideal by copying the real union which exists between the heart of humanity and the Heart which is its Counterpart, or rather its first and innermost Self, the Heart of God. Here, again, we are talking not of regions beyond earthliness, but of the Divinity embodied in that earthliness which is like unto the heart of man. If we have loved *this* God we have virtually solved every problem of society, and embodied in ourselves the predetermination of things towards entire brotherliness, the Social Paradise.

In proof of this, read the sayings of Juliana of Norwich. They, with Hilton's, reach the height of the world's literary interpretation of the mystical Royalty and Priestliness of Christ as the Mystical Pastor of all mankind in brotherliness, and as the Mystical Priest of heaven and earth in a community of fellowship.

The return of men to brotherliness, the consorting again of heavenliness and earthliness in common fellowship, foretold by Isaiah and St. John the Divine, and prayed for by the Master, Christ, will only be consummated in the days of the Mystical Parousia, or Spiritual Return of Christ. But the art of imploring this "rending of the heavens" to bring back the Manifested Christ is to be found precisely in the Mystical Science of Catholicity and nowhere else.

Among all the faint refrains of this scarce remembered Orphean Melody of Christliness, none ever resounded closer to the original than the notes of Christliness struck by Juliana of Norwich and Walter Hilton. The paradox about Juliana's rendering of Christ's sense of brotherliness is that she was an anchoress, and lived a life of seclusion, wholly shut off from the world.

Let the words of this revealer of the unseen fellowship with Christ, and through Him, with all humanity, speak for themselves.

Her conquest over the Pantheistic dragon which partly befoggled the famous Eckhardt, is one of the most noted intellectual achievements of any age; for, in speaking of a consummate union with the Divine, she kept the thought of the Divine and human personalities clearly distinct.

She sought for Christ in isolation, and along the

lonely and narrow path of asceticism, but, having found Him, she found all humanity there, and the entire creation of God. Then this embodied Expression of all brotherliness spoke to her in "noble," "lowly," "homely," "courteous" words of friendliness and fellowship. Her words and experience are a sure pledge that the treasure which the Church of God is bearing with it, in an enclosed manner, to the future of earthly history, is the secret of the true Social Paradise of Christliness reigning on this earth. For those who have gone into the Inner Shrine have seen this same Vision already with their eyes of faith; and their words and lives are, in a sense, a prophetic fulfilment of the prayer of Christ that heaven and earth should become the same place.

It is a highly significant fact that the two most consummate interpreters of the office of Christ as the Angelic Shepherd of humanity should have both belonged to the English nation, namely, Juliana of Norwich and Walter Hilton. It is significant because a nation's spiritual history is one and the same in purpose from first to last, as it was in the case of Ancient Israel. We may therefore hope that the Anglican Church, in its partial separation from the rest of Christendom, has been set apart by God, not for the purpose of mere separation, but for the special purpose of being the instrument bearing that great manifestation of

Christ as the Angelic Shepherd of Brotherliness, whose partial unveiling has already been achieved at the hands of two of England's mystical seers, centuries ago.

THE INNER SHRINE

Part I

THE RETURN OF CHRIST AND OF CHRISTLINESS INTO THE ENTIRE EARTHLY COMMONWEALTH

JOHN OF RUYSBROECK

I

Christ, the Commonwealth, or Entire Fraternity, of Humanity.

We must needs walk in the light if we are not to lose our way, and we must observe Jesus Christ, Who has taught us and preceded us. . . . Christ, the bright sun . . . was unique and united.

In Him were and are collected and united all the virtues which have ever been practised, and which ever will be, and besides this, all the creatures who will cultivate these virtues.

He was thus in a unique sense the Son of the Father, and united to human nature. And He was equally full of inwardness, for it was He Who brought upon earth the fire which has consumed all the saints and all good men.

And He had a sensible and faithful love for His Father and for all who will have joy in Him eternally, and His pitiful and loving heart sighed and glowed with love for all men before His Father. All His life and all His actions, within and without, and all His words, were praises of His Father.

II

The Prophetic Heart of mankind.

CHRIST, the sun of love, blazed and shone yet more brightly and warmly, for in Him was, and is, the fullness of all gifts. This is why the heart of Christ, and His character, and His habits, and His service, overflowed with pity, sweetness, humility, and generosity.

So gracious was He, and so loving, that His manner and His personality attracted all whose nature was good. He was the pure lily in the midst of the flowers of the field, from which the good were to draw the honey of eternal sweetness and eternal consolations.

According to His humanity, He thanked His Eternal Father for all the gifts which were ever granted to humanity, and praised Him, for His Father is the Father of all gifts, and He rested on Him, according to the highest faculties of His soul, above all gifts, in the sublime unity of God, from which all the gifts flow.

III

Christ gave His Christliness to be our perpetual, social, earthly, and heavenly inheritance.

CHRIST, the glorious sun, blazed and shone yet higher, and more brightly and warmly ; for during all His days on earth all His bodily faculties were invited and pressed to the sublime glory and bliss which He now experiences in His senses and body. And He was inclined thereto Himself, according to His desires ; and, nevertheless, He willed to remain in this exile till the time which the Father had foreseen and fixed from all eternity.

When the time came at which Christ was to reap and carry away to the eternal kingdom the fruits of all the virtues which ever have been and ever will be practised, the eternal sun began to descend ; for Christ humbled Himself, and gave up His bodily life into the hands of His enemies.

And He was misunderstood and deserted by His friends in so great a distress ; and all consolation, within and without, was withdrawn from His nature ; and it was overwhelmed with misery,

pain, and contempt, and paid all the debt which our sins justly incurred.

All this He suffered in humble patience, and He accomplished the greatest works of love in this resignation, whereby He received and purchased our eternal inheritance. It is thus that the lower part of His noble humanity was adorned, for it was in it that He suffered this pain for our sins.

It is on this account that He is called the Saviour of the world, and that He is glorified and raised up and seated on the right hand of His Father, and that He reigns in power. And every creature on the earth, above the earth, and under the earth bends the knee for ever before His glorious name.

IV

His Spiritual Return to us with His divine gift of Brotherliness.

WHAT is this coming of the Bridegroom which is eternal? It is a new birth and a new illumination without interruption; for the foundation out of which the clearness shines, and which is the clearness itself, is living and fruitful, and this is why the manifestation of the eternal light is renewed without interruption in the most secret part of the spirit. See, every creaturely work, and every exercise of virtue must here submit themselves, for God works alone in the highest part of the spirit.

There is naught here but an eternal contemplation and fixity of light, by light, and in light. And the coming of the Bridegroom is so swift that He comes always, and is immanent with his unfathomable riches, and comes back ever anew, in person, with such new splendours that He seems never to have come before.

For His coming consists in an eternal NOW, transcending time, and He is always received with

new desire and new joy. The delights and joy which this Bridegroom brings at His coming are without bottom and without limits, for they are Himself.

This is why the eyes of the spirit, by which the lover contemplates the Bridegroom, are open so wide that they will never more be shut. For the contemplation and fixity of the spirit remain eternal in the hidden manifestation of God. And the contemplation of the spirit is so widely opened, while waiting for the coming of the Bridegroom, that the spirit itself acquires the amplitude of that which it comprehends. And in this way God is seen and comprehended by God, in which all our salvation and blessedness consists. This is the second manner in which we receive, without interruption in our spirit, the eternal coming of our Bridegroom.

V

The First Coming of Christ is His Self-revelation to all mankind as the likeness of our final social commonwealth.

THE first coming of Christ to those who are engaged in the exercises of desire is an internal and sensible current from the Holy Spirit, which impels and attracts us to all the virtues. We shall compare this coming to the splendour and power of the sun, which, so soon as it rises, enlightens and warms the whole world in the twinkling of an eye. In the same way Christ, the eternal sun, burns and shines, dwelling at the highest point of the spirit, and enlightens and fires the lower part of man—that is to say, his physical heart and sense-faculties, and this is accomplished in less time than the twinkling of an eye, for the work of God is prompt; but the man in whom it takes place ought to be internally *seeing* by means of his spiritual eyes.

The sun burns in the East, in the middle of the world, on the mountains; there it hastens in the summer, and creates good fruits and strong wines,

filling the earth with joy. The same sun shines in the West, at the end of the world; the country there is colder and the force of the heat less, nevertheless it there produces a great number of good fruits, but not much wine.

The men who dwell in the West part of themselves abide in their external senses, and by their good intentions, their virtues, and their outer practices, by the grace of God, produce abundant harvests of virtues of various kinds, but they rarely taste the wine of inward joy and spiritual consolation.

The man who wishes to experience the rays of the eternal sun, which is Christ Himself, will be *seeing*, and will dwell on the mountains of the East by concentrating all his faculties, and lifting up his heart to God, free and indifferent to joy and pain and all the creatures.

There shines Christ, the sun of righteousness, on the free and exalted heart, and this is what I mean by the mountains. Christ the glorious sun and divine effulgence shines through and fires by His internal coming in the exercises of desire. Just as fire inflames things which are thrown into it, so Christ inflames the hearts offered to Him in freedom and exultation at His internal coming, and He says in this coming, "Go forth by the exercises appropriate to this life."

VI

The Second Coming of Christ is when He transforms an individual man into a Second "Christ."

THE second coming of Christ, our Bridegroom, takes place every day in just men. We do not wish to speak here of the first conversion of man, nor of the first grace which was given him when he was converted from sin to virtue.

But we wish to speak of a daily increase of new gifts and new virtues, and of a more actual coming of Christ, our Bridegroom, into our soul.

Now we must observe the cause, the mode, and the work of this second coming. The cause is fourfold—the mercy of God, our misery, the Divine generosity, and our desire. These four causes make the virtues grow and increase.

Now understand. When the sun sends forth its bright rays into a deep valley between two high mountains, and while it is at the zenith, so that it can illuminate the depths of the valley, a triple phenomenon occurs, for the valley is lighted from the mountains, and it becomes warmer and more fertile than the plain. In the same way, when a

just man sinks in his misery, and recognises that he has nothing and is nothing, that he can neither halt nor go forward by his own strength; and when he perceives also that he fails often in virtues and good works, he thus confesses his poverty and distress, and forms the valley of humility.

And because he is humble and in need, and because he confesses his need, he makes his plaint to the kindness and mercy of God. He is conscious of the sublimity of God and of his own abasement. Thus he becomes a deep valley.

And Christ is the sun of justice and mercy, which burns at the meridian of the firmament—that is to say, at the right hand of the Father, and shines even to the bottom of humble hearts; for Christ is always moved by distress when man humbly offers to Him complaints and prayers.

Then the two mountains rise—that is to say, a double desire; in the first place a desire to serve and love God by His merits, in the second place to obtain excellent virtues. These two desires are higher than heaven, for they touch God without any intermediary, and desire His immense generosity. Then that generosity cannot be kept back, it must flow, for the soul is at this moment susceptible of receiving countless boons.

These are the causes of the second coming of Christ, with new virtues. Then the valley—that is to say, the humble heart—receives three things. It is enlightened the more, and illuminated by charity, and warmed by charity, and becomes more fertile in virtues and good works.

Part II

LIFE PSALMS OF THE LOVER AND THE BELOVED

AN ALLEGORY OF ALL RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

THOMAS À KEMPIS

I

"I shall find Thee."

Thou art beautiful, my Beloved, and exceedingly lovely; not to the flesh, but to the mind; not to the eye nor to any of the senses, but to the believing soul, that hath a pure heart, and hath transferred her affections to things invisible and spiritual.

Whosoever would be united to Thee by devout affections, then, must of necessity mortify all carnal desires in himself, and above all things strictly preserve purity of conscience. For it is displeasing to Thee, if any one goes to the creatures in quest of consolation.

On this account Thou callest me to love Thee in the inner man, and directest me that I should wait

for Thee ; because then I shall find Thee, as often as I despise myself ; and whatsoever Thou willest that will I will.

And this will be for my entire good, that I may freely worship Thee, and freely serve Thee ; not fearing to lose anything, making no terms with love, because thou delightest in the soul that loves Thee purely.

Oh, that I might be wholly united to Thee in such a union, in life and in death ! But I often go far away from Thee in other ways, in loving perishing things, and not seeking the end which it becomes me to do.

Oh, how kind, how sweet Thou art, to them that love Thee ! how pleasant to them that taste Thee ! They who have experienced Thy sweetness know from hence to think and speak better of it ; for Thy sweetness passes all sweetness, and sweetens every bitterness.

II

"Taken away."

THE absence of the Beloved shews me what His presence conferred. I was glad and rejoiced in Him, and was little apprehensive of His speedy departure.

He came skipping on the mountains; joyous and pleasant appeared He at the gates of my house: and immediately the doors of the flesh were closed, and I brought Him in the Beloved to me, and I sat with Him, and rested under His shadow, safe from the storm and tempest.

Then was I glad when I beheld my Beloved. Why should I not rejoice? He is the joy, the exultation of my heart. Ah! what I had then, what did I possess in that hour?

It is not possible for me to tell thee, how well it was with me; nor is it expedient indeed that I should now tell thee. When He Whom alone I loved was present nothing more could I desire.

Oh, how much I loved Him, when I neglected myself and all things else! I cared little or nothing for all that could charm me, because His

love ravished me altogether, and whatsoever concerned Him not seemed incongruous and insipid.

When He was taken away my heart was almost clean gone from me. For my soul hung upon His grace, because I had no other comfort besides Him, Whose absence I lamented.

He was sufficient for me, and was enough for every kind of gladness. What I desired, such He was. And whatever He enjoined me to do I gladly accepted, and gave myself wholly and promptly to Him.

III

"Why didst Thou withdraw?"

WHEREFORE then dost Thou sometimes so secretly withdraw Thyself from the soul when she is not aware of it? Dost Thou love her or not? If Thou lovest her, why, my Beloved, dost Thou fly away?

If Thou lovest her not, why didst Thou visit her aforetime? And if now Thou lovest her not, why dost Thou return again, and knock at the door and enter in?

Surely Thou art not using any fickleness in thus entering in and going away? Far be it from Thee! But such constant changes are no light matter to her: yes, no small disquietude springs therefrom.

And perchance her complaint would have been less if Thou wert openly to say to her: "I go away, and come again, and thy heart shall rejoice, and thy joy no man shall take from thee."

But now Thou speakest no precious word to her, and she only remembers that passage of which she experiences the truth, that Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the Temple.

IV

"He gave me no answer."

I HAVE sought Him, saith the soul, but I cannot find Him; I have called unto Him, but He gave me no answer. Therefore my soul slept for heaviness.

And I said, This is the voice of the turtle when she hath lost her mate. It is not to-day as it was yesterday and in days gone by, when thou sangest songs of joy.

The morning passed away and the evening came; but the Bridegroom lieth down at noonday, and it is not allowed me to approach Him.

Thy words express sadness, and thine eyes are wet with tears. Thou art in grief, O soul, and hast need of consolation. But tell me how it arises?

It is not gold or silver that I seek for myself, or anything in the world; it is not loss or gain, nor is it injury or penury that affects me, for as regards these things I am dead to the world and crucified.

If I know thee well, thou hast long ago re-

nounced all that is in the world; but I ask, hast thou also perfectly learnt self-abnegation in all things, and hast thou attained to the contempt of thyself?

This is the goal of very few, but it is especially required of thee. Whence then arises thy grief? What hast thou lost?

If it is touching thy Beloved, I know that not without a cause sorrow hath filled thy heart, and nothing can be joyous unto thee till He return, and restore to thee the light of His countenance.

But how in the meantime dost thou keep up, O delicate soul, that leanest upon the Beloved? For it is evident to me that He is not always present when He is wished for.

When therefore He is absent, wherein dost thou quiet thyself? Tell thy secrets to me, although they be full of grief. None, but he who loves not, will doubt that thou grievest for Christ's absence.

At present thou art very sad, but it is for Christ the Bridegroom, it is not for this world; and I know that when He shall return thou shalt again be comforted, since He will not be forgetful of thee for ever. For He has said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I go away and will come again to you."

V

"By what means can He be reconciled?"

HERE I am again, then, seeking to inquire of thee what thou in the meantime doest when thy Beloved at any time leaveth thee without internal consolation. What dost thou advise, also, on such an occasion? And by what means can He be reconciled or called back?

I entreat thee, O dearest and devout spouse of Christ, keep none of these things secret from me, which I have come to question thee about. Thou canst by this means do me a service, by imparting to me what thou piously thinkest.

From thy words I can measure the weight of my own grief, and whether I sorrow justly or unjustly. For I have seen thee at times cheerful, and at other times very sorrowful, and then again I have beheld thee rejoicing, and from thee I have in some measure considered my own case.

But I reckon that the cause of this change most chiefly arises from the withdrawal and return of thy only Beloved; in which case knowing that thou hast suffered many things, I have come to be instructed.

And she (that soul) said, In yielding to thy wishes, I will endeavour to state openly what things were transacted within me; whether it be when I am with the Beloved, or when I remain alone, as one that is weaned, expecting Him Whom my soul loveth.

Truly this thou shouldst know first, that in proportion to the joy and sweetness which His Grace confers upon me, even so great is the grief and bitterness which His absence causes.

VI

"If Thou drawest, behold I come."

GLADLY do I follow Thee, O Beloved Jesus, while on earth, but much more gladly would I follow Thee to heaven: for where my Treasure is there will my heart be also.

Thou art my Treasure, dearer than every creature, Thou who art at the right hand of God. For me Thou becamest Incarnate, for me Thou hast been exalted.

Thou hast left me an example on earth: Thou keepest Thyself as my reward in heaven. To Thee, then, mine eyes are lifted up, and after Thee all my steps shall go.

Draw me, then, that I may begin to run fervently after Thee. I need drawing, yea, much drawing. For unless Thou drawest, no one comes, no one follows, because every one turneth to himself.

If thou drawest, behold I come, behold I hasten, I run, I am in a fervour. But if not, I neither run, nor do I seek, scarcely do I desire to follow. But if Thou givest me Thy hand, I run the more quickly, the more strongly Thou drawest.

It is the voice of my Beloved that draws me and says, "And when I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me." O good Jesus, draw me after Thee; and not I only but all of us who run after the odour of Thy ointments.

Oh! sweet society with Christ, and under the wings of Christ. Oh! gracious intimacy, full of love, and of the sweetness of the Holy Ghost, which is far better felt than described.

This belongs to the soul which has weaned itself from all worldly things, which no love of the present life holds captive, but which in the secret of her mind is carried upwards.

VII

"My soul hangeth upon Thee."

O LORD GOD, why doest thou thus? What strange sport is this? O good Jesus, what meanest Thou by this? Were it not displeasing to Thee, I would hear further intercourse between Thee and Thy beloved.

Since in all her wishes she seeks Thy gracious presence, with which to be caressed with pure delights, I wonder why Thou allowest her sometimes to remain desolate. Thou passest by, and withdrawest as if she had not sought Thee.

But she moaneth and is solitary; for that is her voice which seems to say, "My soul hath longed for Thee in the night season." It is night to her when Thou, the true Light, art not present.

Therefore she prays for Thy presence, lest the darkness of sin seize hold of her. Many are the troubles that she feels, when the Grace of Thy visitation is withdrawn from her.

For unless she were under some suffering, she would not so longingly have cried after Thee. She hath cried out, and another hath also, in

words which have been before spoken: "My soul hangeth upon Thee."

But I think no trouble can be so grievous, or seem so grievous, as this that Thy presence should be wanting.

VIII

"Of this mercy I was able to stand."

FROM that time when I first began to love Him, I have also wished to persevere with Him. Which when I had so resolved, this very thing was so pleasing to Him that He confirmed it, saying, "He that remaineth in Me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit."

But that it might be proved how true, how strong, how chaste the power of love was, it was needful that temptation should disclose it. But I could not be tempted, unless He permitted it, and withdrew Himself for a season.

And because temptation was wont to be very helpful to the purifying of the inner man, and to the abundant fructification of virtues, as well as to the clearer perception of spiritual gifts, it took hold upon me, and began to try me.

How mightily and how frequently it tossed me hither and thither, my God and my Lord, from Whom no secret is hid, very well knoweth: Who is a witness of all things which are carried on in my heart. And until now He beholdeth me, and

considereth me to be nothing more than a frail creature.

Unless, therefore, He had assisted me, when I was so anxiously weighed down, so that I scarcely believed that I could live, my soul had well-nigh dwelt in hell, as if I had already fallen into the pit of despair.

But He had mercy on me, Who is wont to be present with such as are troubled in heart. For who was strong enough to endure so many temptations unless God had protected and succoured him?

Of His mercy it was that I was able to stand before the face of the storm. And it comes from the gift of His goodness that I know that I still stand. Hence I ought not to put any trust in myself so long as I am in the flesh.

IX

"I enjoyed a little rest."

Oh, how great was His mercy towards me, for even when I was ignorant of it, or did not heed it, He was with me in the trial! For many times hath He preserved me, that I might not be delivered over to my passions.

But sometimes of His hidden judgment it came to pass that I should fall, and be overcome even in small things, lest peradventure I should become proud and be presumptuous in great ones; so that, being humbled and confounded, I might learn that I was nothing, even when I seemed to stand well and flourished most.

I advise thee, therefore, that thou shouldst not rashly or hastily praise me, although I go prosperously forward, but rather reserve thy praise for a holy end; and then praise not me, but the Lord.

Let the glorious God alone, Who hath many times stood by me in my temptations, be praised.

For often when I was led captive by them, He mercifully set me free. And sometimes when they were coming against me as a whirlwind to carry

me away, He sent forth His arrows and scattered them, He multiplied His lightnings and confounded them.

Again for a time they departed from me. Yet He would not that I should be altogether without them, because He has rarely granted this to any of His saints in this life.

After this, therefore, I enjoyed a little rest, my Beloved bestowing peace upon me; which having nevertheless obtained, I did not give myself to bodily or worldly ease; but I turned my mind that so I might behold the earth from afar, and look a little into the secret things of heaven.

I then designed with myself also, to see what kind of person I was, and by what means I could better please Him Who had shewn me so many tokens of love, so vastly exceeding my deserts.

For it was not in the whirlwind of temptation that I was able to see how sweet my Beloved was, but in serenity of mind and in the quiet of solitude.

And, as far as in me lay, I did desire this serenity of peace without intermission; that I might more perfectly cleave to Him, and wait upon Him, without any hindrance or trouble.

But the effect of grace does not always follow according to the desire of the soul. Yet sometimes the desired sweetness is granted, sometimes it is very rightly delayed.

X

"He draws nigh."

It is no small privilege that I am permitted to address Him (the Beloved) on any occasion whatever, because He has so often freely anticipated me with His gracious visitations.

Furthermore, when He draws nigh, and is minded to keep holy day with me, immediately a light shines in my heart, before the brightness of which the dark vapour of all vain thoughts is driven away, and the long-wished-for serenity is possessed.

For at His entering nothing that is shameful or indecent can remain, because He is the Lover and Engrafter of purity. Moreover, every illusion of the devil with all the pomps of the world must depart forthwith.

When, therefore, my passions and the temptations which I had endured were thus subdued, I began to recognise Him more clearly, and to love Him more fervently. I endeavoured likewise to give Him hearty thanks, that now, at length, He has vouchsafed to keep me from the commotion of sins.

For they were often wont to break in upon my peace, and strove to shut my mouth, so that I could not speak to my Beloved.

But fruitless were their endeavours against His power and wisdom, Who in the midst of any commotion can glide into my heart, and silently infuse into me His secrets, so that I can count all their whisperings as nothing, and do not inwardly attend to them.

XI

"My God Who healest and hallowest all."

O MY Beloved, most dear, most beautiful, take me, I implore Thee, so to Thyself as often as Thou shalt see my affections pressed down by any weight of sin or held back by any useless occupation, so that I may not begin to wander away further from Thee, after crowds of evil thoughts, and thereby be suddenly deprived of Thy grace, without which I shall not be able to continue in Thy most excellent friendship.

For thou art my Lord and my God, Who healest and hallowest all things by Thy Word; Who hast appointed my soul for life, and hast not suffered my feet to be moved, but hast delivered me from the evil hour, and hast extricated me from the snares of death.

Oh, how many have been forsaken and have perished who were more innocent than I! Bless, then, the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Whatever Thou sayest, or thinkest, or offerest

in praise, all is far too little, and comes exceedingly short. For greater is He than all praise and sweeter than all melody.

Therefore my soul cleaveth unto Thee and loveth Thee over and above all Thy gifts, though beautiful and sweet is everything that Thou hast out of charity bestowed upon me.

For Thou alone art the Bridegroom: the rest are presents and tokens of Thy love. I will not love them instead of Thee, nor will I believe that all things can suffice me without Thee, lest peradventure I lose at once both Thee and them.

Thou permittest me to use many things for Thy sake, but Thou wouldest not that I should enjoy any of these things instead of Thee.

Therefore, my Beloved Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, I have preferred Thee to all, and have striven to love Thee beyond all else. Grant me, then, happily to enjoy Thee, and in fruitful union with Thee I may be made happy for ever together with Thee.

XII

"Bear thyself up a little while."

Thou askest if I am sometimes left by the Beloved. I answer, Yes!

I sustain myself with as much equanimity as I possibly can, and so I wait till He comes again. I am weighed down in nature, but in spirit I am inwardly upheld; otherwise my grief would be inconsolable.

Then I remember that there is no living in love without some grief. I live by faith, I believe the Holy Scriptures, and I assent to their consoling words. And though for the present it may be bad with me, I do not doubt, neither ought I to doubt, but that it will yet become better.

True and faithful are those things which are narrated in the sayings of the saints, for they were exercised and proved in many such-like ways. Nature ever wishes to be relieved, and seeks to be comforted somehow. But the spirit, nevertheless, is ready to endure all things, whatsoever God would have me to suffer.

If, then, I should sometimes be indevout and

sluggish in the performance of good works, yet is my wound not without a remedy.

"Though He slay me," saith the righteous, "yet will I trust in Him." If I love virtues, patience is a great virtue; let it now therefore be in some measure preserved.

For the difficulty of a work frequently increases the lustre of the virtue; but that the virtue may be proved, and be made brighter and brighter, it is generally tried by contraries.

When such a trial, then, comes upon thee do not doubt, neither be cast down, but preserve thy patience, and commend the righteousness of God.

God is not so severe and unmerciful that He should suffer thee to remain long disconsolate. Only take heed that thou do not grieve immoderately, and that thou murmur not against the righteous and Holy One, because thou art left.

Lest the evil spirit assail thee with bitter temptations to despair and blasphemy, and being too fearful, thou be more tormented by them than it behoveth thee to be.

Therefore bear thyself up a little while and suppress thy grief, whatever be the heaviness of mind or pain of body that is forced upon thee.

Continue firm in the good resolution which thou hadst determined to keep from the beginning. For it is especially helpful in such a crisis to cast all thy hope on the Beloved.

Patiently wait for heavenly consolation, and thou shalt soon receive more abundant grace and experience the favour of God. Behold thou hast a faithful witness, saying, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me."

XIII

"Therefore will I prove thee."

THE Beloved spake also to the loving soul, saying: I will hide My face from her for a little while; I will leave her for a moment, that I may see whether she purely loves Me.

It is a great matter to love purely, for this is to love Me, not on account of herself nor for any temporal advantage or spiritual comfort, but to love Me only for My own sake, and finally herself on account of Me, and not for anything she hopes to obtain from Me.

It does not appertain to all thus to love Me; but this prerogative of pure love is solely the property of a most perfect soul.

But that soul which is as yet imperfect hath need to be frequently proved and aroused, that she may know how much she loves, and if she hath yet learned to despise herself.

For thou saidst in thine heart, "I love indeed." And frequently didst thou repeat the same, "I love." But I believe not in words or thoughts only. Therefore in the truth thereof will I prove thee.

When I am present and speak fair to thee; when I bestow devotion, or increase the gift; when all is prosperous and for the most part I am pleasant to thee, then thou devoutly sayest, "My Beloved, I love Thee."

And thou sayest well; for I am very lovely; and all things that can be said or thought of Me are lovely and sweet, and for ever praiseworthy.

But what great thing is this, to love and praise Me only for kindnesses? For even sinners do this. They often truly bless Me when they receive what they desire unrighteously. But praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner.

Whosever, then, loves Me for the sake of a benefit or consolation, what does he more than the covetous? Advance, advance, and ascend to greater perfection.

Be ashamed to be always weak and effeminate: learn to eat solid food, and not to be fed any longer on the milk for little children. Pass over to the number of the mighty men of David, of them that take hold of the spear, the sword, and the shield.

Take up thy cross, and follow Me. Make haste to be reckoned among those who know how to bear divers troubles and many kinds of exile for My sake.

Thou art bent too much on comfort. Therefore I will prove thee, and incline to the other side,

that thou mayest know what thou canst suffer, lest thou seem to thyself innocent and holy.

And after this I will come, and thou shalt be restored to the former grace. For I would not have thee faint altogether, since I love him that loveth Me.

And if thou dost not yet love perfectly, still I do not despise the little one; but will take care that thou growest. My care for thee is that thou mayest do well, I would not therefore that thou have any hesitation concerning Me.

I know indeed how much thou art able to bear; and therefore do I temper My visitation, that thou mayest be able to endure when tempted, and not fail.

If, however, I shall make some delay, wait for Me till the day of visitation; I will indeed come and make good My promise.

But do thou pay attention to prayer, be diligent in sacred reading, and in all things hold fast patience and longsuffering.

For I am not ignorant, that during My absence thou art in grief; but it is certainly not pleasing to Me that thou art so soon cast down, and givest up all hope, as if I should not return.

Where is thy faith? Great faith thou hast especially need of in this state; because although thou seest Me not, thou art seen by Me, to Whom thou shouldst commit thyself, and all that thou hast.

XIV

"Return unto Me."

RETURN therefore unto Me, saith my Beloved. It is enough that thou hast until now run about hither and thither. Learn to be steadfast and meek, hoping and trusting in Me, not only in the day of visitation, but more abundantly in the night of temptation.

I left thee, that, being wearied, thou mightest the more quickly return to Me; and being disappointed in thy outward consolations, thou mightest understand how great a blessing My love which so often invited thee, hath conferred upon thee.

Consider, therefore, now—for it is not without a reason—wherefore thou art sometimes left, that thou remainest without affection, that thou art afflicted with weariness:

That thou art oppressed with temptations, that thou art cast hither and thither; that thou findest no counsel, neither feelest any help, but sufferest straitness and want on every side.

I leave thee, then, that thou mayest know that

My presence is necessary to thee; not only in one thing or even so much in great matters, but truly in every action, in every place, and time: in the morning as well as the evening, and wherever thou art, or goest, or stayest.

Thus indeed shalt thou be instructed to walk more carefully with thy Beloved; to abstain from vanities, and to beware of giving offence.

I leave thee that thou mightest know how much thou lovest Me; that is, that the measure of thy love may be seen.

Thou didst esteem thyself to be stronger and more blessed than thou really wast; but it became evidently clear that when My help was taken from thee for a while thou wast poor and miserable.

After what manner could thy love be made known, unless it were when thou shouldst bear heavy afflictions with meekness?

Sometimes I see thee lukewarm; but that thou mayest be stirred up to fervour, and diligence in seeking me, I conceal Myself for an hour, as a lover standing behind a wall.

I see, and I know all things; but exercise is profitable for many things, and often gives greater insight. Moreover if thou lovest Me, thou wilt not delay to seek Me. If I please thee thou wilt seek for Me more eagerly.

Knowest thou not that riches gotten with labour are held fast with great eagerness? To whom is

rest so desirable as to the weary traveller? To whom is love so pleasant as to the lover who has previously endured grief?

And a treasure that is regained, is it not twice as dear as it was before? A double joy and abundant gladness return, because the presence of the Beloved has been intermitted.

For thy profit, then, I withdraw myself; and I do this not because of any displeasure, but for a certain gracious dispensation do I sport with them that love Me.

Let this suffice for the present, because thou art worthy to hear this much.

But I give thee leave to return to Me, as often as thou feelest it to be needful. I have never shut up My bowels of compassion against those that humbly and earnestly supplicate Me.

XV

"The wings of true freedom."

O MY beloved Bridegroom Jesu Christ, Thou purest Lover, Thou Lord of all creation; oh that I had the wings of true freedom that I might flee away and rest in Thee!

Oh, when shall it be fully granted me to be at ease and see how sweet Thou art, O Lord my God? When shall I fully gather myself up into Thee: that for love of Thee I may not feel myself, but Thee alone above all sense and measure, in a manner not known to all?

But now I often sigh, and bear my infelicity with grief. Because many evils meet me in this vale of miseries, which often trouble, sadden, and overcloud me; often hinder and distract, allure and entangle me: so that I can have no free access unto Thee, nor enjoy the sweet embraces which are ever ready for the blessed spirits.

Let my sighs move Thee and my manifold desolation here on earth, O Jesu, Thou brightness of eternal glory, Thou comfort of the pilgrim soul. Heard of Thee is my voiceless tongue, and my silence speaketh unto Thee.

How long doth my Lord delay His coming? Let Him come unto me His poor one, and make me glad. Let Him put forth His hand, and save a poor wretch from every difficulty. Come, come: for without Thee no day nor hour is joyful: for Thou art my joy and without Thee my table is empty.

A wretched creature am I in a manner imprisoned and loaded with fetters; until Thou refresh me with the light of Thy presence and grant me freedom: and shew a friendly countenance towards me.

Let others seek what they will instead of Thee; but for me nothing doth nor shall delight me, but Thou only, God my hope, my eternal salvation. I will not hold my peace nor cease to pray until Thy grace return again, and Thou speak unto me within.

Behold, here I am; behold, I come unto Thee; for Thou hast called Me. Thy tears and the desire of Thy soul: Thy humiliation and Thy contrition of heart have inclined and brought Me unto Thee.

And I said: Lord, I have called Thee, and desired to enjoy Thee, being ready to refuse all things for Thy sake. For Thou first hast roused me, that I may seek Thee. Blessed be Thou, therefore, Lord, that hast shewed this goodness to Thy servant according to the multitude of Thy mercies.

XVI

"The runlets of the Divine whisper."

I WILL hearken what the Lord God will speak in me:

Blessed is the soul which hears the Lord speaking within her: and receives from His mouth the word of consolation.

Blessed are the ears that welcome the runlets of the Divine whisper: and heed not the whisperings of this world.

Blessed indeed are those ears that listen not to the voice which babbles without: but to the Truth which teaches within.

Blessed are the eyes, which are shut to the outward, but open to the inward.

Blessed are they that press into things within: and study to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises, for the receipt of heavenly secrets.

Blessed are they who give themselves eagerly up to God: and shake themselves free from all worldly hindrance.

Consider this, O my soul: and shut the door of

thy sensual desires: that thou mayest hear what the Lord thy God shall speak in thee.

Thus saith thy Beloved: I am thy Salvation, thy Peace and thy Life. Keep thyself with Me, and thou shalt find peace. Let the transitory pass: seek the eternal.

What are all things temporal, but a snare? and what can all creatures avail thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creator?

Bid farewell therefore to all things, make thyself pleasing and faithful to thy Creator: that thou mayest lay hold of true blessedness.

XVII

"To repeat is delightful to him that loveth."

To him that understands enough is said: and to repeat it often is delightful to him that loveth. For when thou art present all things are delightful: but when thou art absent, all is wearisome.

Thou makest quietness of heart and great peace, and festive joy. Thou makest us to think well of all things and in all to praise Thee: neither can anything please long without Thee; but if it is to be pleasant and palatable:

Thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the seasoning of Thy Wisdom. If Thou art sweet, all is sweet: if Thou art not sweet, what can please?

But the wise men of the world and they to whom the flesh is sweet are poor in Thy sweet wisdom: for in the world is utter vanity, and in the flesh is death.

But they that follow Thee through contempt of worldly things and mortification of the flesh, are known to be truly wise: for they are translated from vanity to truth, from flesh to spirit. To these

God is sweet; and what good soever is found in creatures: they make the theme for praise of their Creator.

But great, yea very great, is the difference between the sweetness of the Creator and of the creature: of Eternity and of time: of Light uncreated and of light enlightened.

O Everlasting Light, surpassing all created luminaries, dart the beams of Thy brightness from above and penetrate all the corners of my heart. Purify, beautify, beautify and vivify my spirit with all its powers: that I may cleave unto Thee with transports of jubilation.

Oh for the coming of that blessed and desirable hour when Thou wilt satisfy me with Thy Presence, and be unto me all in all! So long as this is not granted, neither will my joy be full.

Still, alas, the old man lives in me: not wholly is he crucified, not perfectly is he dead. Still lusts he mightily against the Spirit, stirs up inward wars, nor suffers the kingdom of the soul to be in peace.

But Thou that rulest the power of the sea and stillest the tossing of its waves, arise and help me. Scatter the nations that delight in war: quell Thou them in Thy might. Shew forth Thy wonderful works, I beseech Thee, and let Thy right hand be glorified; for there is no other hope or refuge for me, save in Thee, O Lord, my God.

Part III

ON THE SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL PAROUSIA OF CHRIST IN LIVING FELLOWSHIP

JULIANA OF NORWICH

I

The Marvellous Homeliness of this Fellowship.

Verily it is the most joy that may be, as to my sight, that He, that is highest and mightiest, noblest and worthiest, is lowest and meekest, homeliest and most courteous.

And truly and verily this marvellous joy shall He shew us all when we shall see Him.

And this willeth our good Lord, that we believe, and trust, and joy, and likewise comfort us, and make solace, as we may, with His grace and with His help, unto the time that we see it verily.

For the most fullness of joy, that we shall have, as to my sight, is this marvellous courtesy and homeliness of our Father, that is our Maker, in our Lord Jesus Christ, that is our Brother and our Saviour.

But this marvellous homeliness may no man know in this life, unless he have it by special shewing of our Lord, or of great plenty of grace inwardly given of the Holy Ghost; but faith and belief with charity deserve the same; and so it is had by grace.

For in faith, with hope and charity, our life is grounded. The shewing is made to whom that God will plainly teach the same, opened and declared, with many privy points, belonging to our faith and belief, which be worshipful to know.

And when the shewing, which is given for a time, is passed and hid, then faith keepeth it by grace of the Holy Ghost, unto our life's end.

And thus, by the shewing it is none other than faith, nor less, nor more, as it may be seen by our Lord's meaning in the same matter, by the time it come to the last end.

II

Words on the Social Paradise.

We be all one in love; for verily it was not shewed to me for that God loveth me better than the least soul that is in grace.

For I am sure there be many, that never have shewing nor sight, but of the common teaching of Holy Church, that love God better than I.

For if I look singularly to myself, I am right naught. But in general I am, I hope, in one unity of charity with all my fellow-Christians.

For in this unity standeth the life of all mankind that shall be saved; for God is all that is good, as to my sight.

And God hath made all that is made, and God loveth all that He hath made; and he that generally loveth all his fellow-Christians, for God's sake, he loveth all that is.

For in mankind that shall be saved, is comprehended all; that is to say, all that is made, and the Maker of all; for in man is God, and in God is all; and he that loveth thus he loveth all.

III

How our eventual Brotherhood is forestalled here and now in the meaning that God sees beyond our own meanings.

He gave understanding of two parts. The one part is our Saviour and our salvation. This blessed part is open, clear, fair, and light, and plenteous; for all mankind that is of goodwill, and that shall be, is comprehended in this part.

Hereto we be bound of God, and drawn and counselled, and learned inwardly by the Holy Ghost, and outwardly by Holy Church, in the same grace. In this willeth our Lord that we be occupied; joying in Him, for He joyeth in us.

And the more plenteously that we take of this, with reverence and meekness, the more thanks we deserve of Him, and the more speed to ourself. And thus may we see and enjoy our part in our Lord.

The other part is hid and shut up from us; that is to say, all that is besides our salvation, for that is our Lord's privy counsel, and it belongeth to His counsels, for obedience and reverence, not to will to know His counsels.

Our Lord hath pity and compassion on us, for that some creatures make themselves so busy therein ; and I am sure, if we wist how greatly we should please Him, and ease ourselves, to leave it, we would.

The saints in heaven, they will nothing wit, but what our Lord will shew them ; and also their charity and their desire is ruled after the will of God ; and thus ought we, that our wills may be like to theirs.

Then shall we nothing will, nor desire, but the will of our Lord, like as they do ; for we be all one in God's meaning.

And here I was learned that I should only rejoice in our Blessed Saviour Jesus, and trust in Him for all things.

IV

The true Paradise of Christ is to exercise this Christliness in holy fellowship with men.

He saith: "It is a joy, a bliss, and endless liking to Me, that ever I suffered passion for thee." And this is the bliss of Christ's work.

And thus He meaneth where He saith, in the same shewing, "We be His bliss, we be His reward, we be His worship, we be His crown."

For in regard that Christ is our Head, He is glorified and impassible; and in regard of His body, in which all His members be knit, He is not yet full glorified, nor all impassible.

For the same thirst that He had upon the rood-tree (which desire, longing, and thirst, as to my sight, was in Him from without beginning), the same hath He yet, and shall have, unto the time that the last soul that shall be saved is come up to His bliss.

For, as truly as there is a property in God of ruth and pity, as verily there is in God a property of thirst and longing; and of the virtue of this longing in Christ, we have to long again after Him, without which no soul cometh to heaven.

And this property of longing and thirst cometh of the endless goodness of God, right as the property of pity cometh of His endless goodness.

And though He have longing and pity they be sundry properties, as to my sight. And in this standeth the point of the ghostly thirst, which is lasting in Him as long as we be in need, us drawing up to His bliss.

And all this was seen in shewing compassion, for that shall cease at domesday.

Thus He hath ruth and compassion on us; and He hath longing to have us; but His wisdom and His love suffer not the same to come to the best time.

V

Communion with a Saint.

OUR Lord shewed St. John of Beverley full highly, in comfort of us, for homeliness (and country's sake); and brought to my mind how he is a kind neighbour, and of our knowing.

And God called him plainly Saint John of Beverley, as we do, and that with a full glad and sweet cheer, shewing that he is a full high Saint in His sight, and a blissful.

And with this He made mention that, in his youth, and in his tender age, he was a dear worthy servant to God; full greatly loving and dreading. And nevertheless God suffered him to fall, him mercifully keeping that he perished not, nor lost no time.

And afterward God raised him to manifold more grace; and by the contrition and the meekness that he had in his living, God hath given him in heaven manifold joys, overpassing that he should have had, if he had not sinned or fallen.

And that this is true God sheweth in earth with plenteous miracles doing about his body continually. And all this was to make us glad and merry in love.

VI

Prayer is a reversion unto the Deeds of Christ.

By the gracious light of Himself He willeth that we have understanding of three things that follow :—

The first is, our noble and excellent making. The second, our precious and dear worthy again-being. The third, all things that He hath made beneath us, to serve us, and for our love keepeth.

Then meaneth He thus, as if He said, "Behold, and see that I have done all this before thy prayer, and now thou art, and prayest Me."

And thus He meaneth that it belongeth to us, to wit, that the greatest deeds be done as Holy Church teacheth.

And in the beholding of this, with thanking, we ought to pray for the deed that is now doing, and that is, that He rules us, and guide us to His worship in this life, and bring us to His bliss, and therefore He hath done all.

Then meaneth He thus, that we see that He doth it; and we pray therefore for that one is not enough.

For if we pray, and see not that He doth it, it maketh us heavy and doubtful, and that is not His worship.

And if we see that He doth it, and pray not, we do not our duty; and so it may not be, that is to say, so is it not in His beholding.

But to see that He doth it, and to pray forthwith, so is He worshipped and we sped.

VII

To pray in fellowship with Christ is to pray with the might and efficacy of Christ.

All things that our Lord ordained to do, it is His will that we pray therefore, either in special or in general.

And the joy and the bliss that is to Him, and the thanks and the worship that we shall have therefore, it passeth the understanding of all creatures in this life, as to my sight.

For prayer is a righteous understanding of that fullness of joy that is for to come, with true longing and very trust, savouring or seeing our bliss, that we be ordained to, naturally maketh us to long.

True understanding and love, with sweet meaning in our Saviour, graciously maketh us trust. And thus have we it of nature to long, and of grace to trust.

And in these two workings our Lord beholdeth us continually, for it is our duty. And His goodness may no less assign in us, that belongeth to us, to do our diligence thereto.

And when we do it, yet shall us think that it is

naught; and true it is: but do we it as we may, and meekly ask mercy and grace, and all that us faileth we shall find it in Him.

And thus meaneth He where He saith, "I am the ground of thy beseeching." And thus in those blissful words, with the shewing, I saw a full overcoming against all our wickedness and all our doubtful dreads.

VIII

The end of all prayer of fellowship is the vivid and effective Spiritual Return of Christ.

WHAT time we see need wherefore we pray, then our Lord God followeth us, helping our desire; and when we of His special grace plainly behold Him, seeing none of other needs, then we follow Him.

And He draweth us to Him by love; for I saw and felt that His marvellous and His fulsome goodness fulfilleth all our might.

And therewith I saw that His continual working in all manner of things is done so godly, so wisely, and so mightily, that it overpasseth all our imagining, and all that we can mean or think.

And then we can do no more than behold Him, and rejoice with a high mighty desire to be all united to Him, and attend to His motion, and rejoice in His loving, and delight in His goodness.

And thus shall we, with His sweet grace, in our own meek continual prayer, come unto Him now in this life, by many privy touchings of sweet

ghostly sights, and feelings, measured to us as our simpleness may bear it.

And this is wrought, and shall be, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, so long till we shall die in longing for love; and then shall we all come unto our Lord, ourselves clearly knowing, and God fulsomely loving.

And we shall endlessly be all hid in God, verily seeing, and fulsomely feeling, Him ghostly hearing, and Him delectably knowing, and Him sweetly following, and there shall we see God face to face, homely and fulsomely.

The creature, which is made, shall see and endlessly behold God which is the Maker: For thus may no man see God and live after, that is to say, in this mortal life. But when He, of His special grace, will shew Him here, He strengtheneth the creature above itself, and He measureth the shewing after His own will, and it is profitable for the time.

IX

An orthodox view of the Parousia as the completed fellowship of Man (and hence all human society) in our Maker, our Maker-again, and our Sanctifier.

HIGHLY ought we to rejoice that God dwelleth in our soul, and far more highly ought we to rejoice that our soul dwelleth in God.

Our soul is made to be God's dwelling-place, and the dwelling of our soul is God, which is unmade.

A high understanding it is inwardly to see and to know, that God, which is our Maker, dwelleth in our soul.

And a higher understanding it is, and more inward, to see and to know that our soul, that is made, dwelleth in God in substance; of which substance by God we be that we be.

And I saw no difference between God and our substance, but as it were all God.

And yet my understanding took that our substance is in God; that is to say, that God is God, and our substance is a creature in God.

For the Almighty Truth of the Trinity is our

Father, for He made us and keepeth us in Himself; and the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, in whom we be enclosed; and the high goodness of the Trinity is our Lord, and in Him we be enclosed, and He in us.

We be enclosed in the Son, and we be enclosed in the Holy Ghost.

And the Father is enclosed in us, the Son is enclosed in us, and the Holy Ghost is enclosed in us; all might, all wisdom, and all goodness, one God, one Lord.

And our faith is a virtue that cometh from our natural substance into our sensuous soul by the Holy Ghost.

In which virtue all our virtues come into us, for without that no man may receive virtues, for it is naught else but a right understanding, with true belief, and secure trust of our being, that we be in God, and He in us, whom we see not.

And this virtue, with all others that God hath ordained to us coming therein, worketh in us great things; for Christ mercifully is working in us, and we graciously accord to Him, through the gift and the virtue of the Holy Ghost.

This working maketh that we be Christ's children, and Christian in living.

X

"How it is easier to know God than our own soul, God being nearer to us. God willeth us to desire the knowledge of Him in mercy and grace."

I SAW full surely that it is ready to us, and more easy, to come to the knowing of God, than to know our own soul.

For our soul is so deep grounded in God, and so endlessly treasured, that we may not come to the knowing thereof, till we have first knowing of God, which is the Maker to Whom it is united.

But, notwithstanding, I saw that we have naturally of fullness to desire wisely and truly to know our own soul, whereby we be learned to seek it where it is, and that is in God.

And thus, by the gracious leading of the Holy Ghost, we shall know them both in one. Whether we be stirred to know God or our soul, it is both good and true.

God is more near to us than our own soul; for He is the ground in Whom our soul standeth, and He is the means that keepeth the substance and the sensuousness together, so that they shall never separate.

For our soul sitteth in God in very rest, and our soul standeth in God in secure strength, and our soul is naturally rooted in God in endless love.

And therefore, if we will have knowing of our soul, and communing, and dalliance therewith, it behoveth us to seek into our Lord God, in Whom it is enclosed.

And in regard of our substance, it may rightly be called our soul; and that is by the uniting that it hath in God.

That worshipful city that our Lord Jesus sitteth in, it is our very senses, in which He is enclosed. And our natural substance is enclosed in Jesus, with the Blessed Soul of Christ, sitting in rest in the Godhead.

And I saw full surely that it behoved needs to be, that we should be in longing, and in penance, unto the time that we be led so deep into God, that we verily and truly know our own soul.

And surely I saw that into this high deepness our good Lord Himself leadeth us, in the same love that He made us, and in the same love that He bought us, by mercy and grace, through virtue of His blessed Passion.

And notwithstanding all this, we may never come to the full knowing of God till we know clearly our own soul.

For unto the time that it is in the full might, we may not be all holy, that is, unto the time that our

senses' life, by the virtue of Christ's Passion, be brought up into the substance, with all the profits of our tribulation, that our Lord shall make us to get by mercy and grace.

I had in part teaching, and it is grounded in nature, that is to say, our reason is grounded in God, which is substantially perfect.

Of this substantial kindness, mercy and grace springeth, and spreadeth into us, working all things in fulfilling of our joy.

These be our grounds in which we have our being, our increase, and our fulfilling. For in our nature we have our life and our being, and in mercy and grace we have our increase and our fulfilling.

It be three properties in one goodness; and where that one worketh all work in the things that belong to us.

God willeth we understand, desiring with all our heart, and with all our strength, to have knowing of them ever more and more, unto the time that we be fulfilled.

For fully to know them, and clearly to see them, is naught else but the endless joy and bliss that we shall have in heaven, which God willeth we begin here by the knowing of His love.

For only by our reason we may not profit, unless we have evenly therewith mind and love; nor in our natural ground only that we have in God, we

may not be saved, unless we have, coming of the same ground, mercy and grace.

For of these three working all together we receive all our goods, of which the first be the goods of nature.

For in our first making God gave us as much good, and as great good, as we might receive only in our spirit ; but His foreseeing purpose, in His endless wisdom, would that we were double.

XI

Our "forthbringing" into Christliness.

In our ghostly forthbringing He useth more tenderness in keeping, without any comparison, by as much as our soul is of more price in His sight.

He kindleth our understanding; He prepareth our ways: He easeth our conscience; He comforteth our soul; He lighteneth our heart, and giveth us in part knowing and loving in His blissful Godhead, with gracious mind in His sweet Manhood, and His blessed Passion, with courteous marvelling in His high overpassing goodness: and maketh us to love all that He loveth for His love, and to be well content with Him and with all His works.

And when we fall, hastily He raiseth us by His lovely embrace and His gracious touching.

And when we be strengthened by His sweet working, then we wilfully choose Him by His grace to be His servants and his lovers lastingly.

XIII

The Spiritual Parousia in Sorrow, in Compassion, and in Joy.

GLAD, and merry, and sweet is the blissful, lovely appearance of our Lord to our souls; for He beheld us ever living in love, longing.

And He willeth that our soul be in glad cheer to Him, to yield Him His reward.

And thus I hope with His grace He hath drawn, and more shall draw, the outer appearance to the inner, and shall make us all at one with Him, and each of us with other, in true lasting joy, that is, Jesus.

I have meaning of three manners of appearances of our Lord: the first is, the appearance of Passion, as He shewed whiles He was with us in this life, dying.

The second manner of appearance it is pity, and ruth, and compassion; and this sheweth He to all His lovers, with secureness of keeping that hath need to His mercy.

The third is the blissful countenance, as it shall be without end. And this was oftenest shewed and longest continued.

And thus, in the time of our pain and our woe, He sheweth to us the appearance of His Passion and His Cross, helping us to bear it by His own blessed virtue.

And in time of our sinning, He sheweth to us the appearance of ruth and pity, mightily keeping us, and defending against all our enemies.

And these two be the common appearances which He sheweth to us in this life, therewith meddling the third; and that is His blessed appearance, like in part as it shall be in heaven, and that is by gracious touching of sweet lightening of ghostly life, whereby that we are kept in true faith, hope, and charity, with contrition and devotion, and also with contemplation, and all manner of true joys and sweet comforts.

The blissful appearance of our Lord God worketh it in us by grace.

Part IV

THE TRUE SPIRITUAL RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST TO ALL MANKIND

WALTER HILTON

I

The "Oneing" or Atonement means that human society becomes stamped with the image of Jesus, that is, impressed with Christliness.

Contemplation, as perfect as it can be had in this life, consisteth both in knowing and affecting; that is, in knowing and perfect loving of God, which is when a man's soul is first reformed by perfection of virtues to the image of Jesus, and afterwards, when it pleaseth God to visit him, he is taken in from all earthly and fleshly affections, from vain thoughts and imaginings of all bodily creatures, and, as it were, much ravished and taken up from his bodily senses, and then by the grace of the Holy Ghost is enlightened to see by his understanding Truth itself (which is God) and spiritual things, with a soft, sweet burning love in God, so perfectly that he becometh ravished with

His love, and so the soul, for the time, is become one with God and conformed to the image of the Trinity.

The beginning of this Contemplation may be felt in this life, but the full perfection of it is reserved unto the bliss in heaven.

Of this union and conforming to our Lord speaks St. Paul thus: "He that cleaveth to God is of one spirit with Him"; that is to say, he who by ravishing of love is become united to God, God and that soul are not now two, but both one.

And surely in this oneing consisteth the marriage which passeth betwixt God and the soul, that shall never be dissolved or broken.

II

The true Parousia happens when man by contemplating Christ is impressed with Christliness and bears this Christliness in the living Commonwealth.

To the perfection of this high Contemplation may no man come till he be first reformed in soul to the likeness of Jesus in the perfection of virtues; nor can any man living in mortal body have it continually and habitually in the height of it, but by times when he is visited.

And as I conceive by the writing of holy men, it is a full short time, for soon after he returneth to a sobriety of bodily feeling; and of all this work charity is the cause.

Thus, as I understand St. Paul speaks of himself: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause; it is the love of Christ that constraineth us"; that is, whether we overpass our bodily senses in Contemplation, or we are more sober to you in our bodily feeling, the love of Christ straineth us.

Of this part of Contemplation and of reforming

to God, speaketh St. Paul openly, thus: "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of our Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."

Which is as much as if in the person of himself and all perfect men he had said thus: We, first being reformed by virtues, and having the face of our soul uncovered by opening of our spiritual eye, behold as in a mirror the heavenly joy, being withal full-shaped and oned to the image of our Lord from clearness of faith into clearness of understanding, or else from clearness of desire into that of blessed love; and all this is wrought in a man's soul by the spirit of our Lord, as saith St. Paul.

This part of Contemplation God giveth where He will, to learned and unlearned, to men and to women, to them that are in government, and to solitary also. But it is special, and not common.

And although a man who all his lifetime is active happen to have the gift of it through special grace or favour, yet the fullness of it may no man have, but he that is solitary and in life contemplative.

[NOTE.—Let it not be forgotten that the greater the isolation and solitude of the Catholic Mystic, the greater was his prayerful union with the soul of Christ's Church on earth.]

III

How Desire and Humility bring back Christ into the Earth.

"Every spirit that looseth or unknitteth Jesus, he is not of God."
1 *John* IV. 3.

THIS knitting and fastening of Jesus to a man's soul is wrought by a good will and a great desire to Him, only to have Him and see Him in His bliss spiritually.

The greater this desire is, the faster is Jesus knit to the soul; and the less this desire is, the looser is He knit; whatsoever spirit, therefore, or feeling it is which lesseneth this desire, and would draw it down from the steadfast minding of Jesus Christ and from the kindly breathing or aspiring up to Him, this spirit will unknit Jesus from the soul, and therefore is not of God, but is the working of the enemy.

But if a spirit, or a feeling, or a revelation make this desire more, knitting the knots of love and devotion faster to Jesus, opening the eye of the soul into spiritual knowing more clearly, and maketh it more humble in itself, this spirit is of God.

IV

The Bliss of Heaven (the synonym for entire Christliness) is only wholly reached by that spirit of romantic adventure which impels one to fulfil more than the mere letter of the Law.

He that cannot love this blessed name Jesus with a spiritual joy, nor increase in it with heavenly melody here, shall never have nor feel in heaven the fullness of sovereign joy, which he that could so love it in this life by abundance of perfect charity in Jesus shall then have and feel in heaven, and so may their saying be understood.

Nevertheless he shall be saved, and have great reward in heaven from God, whosoever in this life is in the lowest degree of charity by keeping God's commandments.

For our Lord saith: "In My Father's house are sundry mansions." Some are perfect souls, who in this life are filled with charity and graces of the Holy Spirit, and sing most sweetly and lovingly to God in Contemplation of Him, with wonderful sweetness and heavenly savour.

These, because they have most charity and

grace of the Holy Ghost shall have the highest reward in the bliss of heaven, for these are called God's darlings.

Others there be, not disposed or enabled to Contemplation, nor having the perfection of charity (as the apostles and martyrs had in the beginning of the holy Church), these shall have a lower reward in the bliss of heaven, for these are called God's friends; for thus doth our Lord call them: "Eat, O My friends, and be inebriated, O My darlings."

This is as if He had said: Ye that are My friends, because ye have kept My commandments, and preferred My love before the love of the world, and loved Me more than any earthly thing, ye shall be fed with the spiritual food of the Bread of Life.

But ye that are more than My friends, that not only kept My commandments, but also of your own free will fulfilled My counsels, and loved Me entirely with all the powers of your souls, and burned in My love with spiritual delight (as especially did the apostles and martyrs and all other souls that through grace came to the gift of perfection) ye shall drink of the noblest and freshest wine in My cellar, which is the supreme joy of love in heaven.

V

How the true Jesus is re-born in this world in place of us in a Spiritual Second Advent.

If thou feelest a great desire in thy heart to Jesus, either by calling to mind this name Jesus, or by minding or thinking, or saying of any other word; or in Prayer or Meditation, or any other Deed which thou dost; which desire is so much, that it putteth out, as it were, by force all other thoughts and desires of the world, and of the flesh, that they rest not in thy heart; then seekest thou well thy Lord Jesus.

And when thou feelest this desire to God, or to Jesus (for it is all one), holpen and comforted by a ghostly might, insomuch that it is turned into love, affection, and spiritual savour and sweetness, into light and knowing of truth, so that for a time the point of thy thought is set upon no other created thing, nor feeleth any stirring of vain glory, nor of self-love, nor any other evil affection (for they cannot appear at that time), but this thy desire is only enclosed, rested, softened, supplied,

and anointed in Jesus, then hast thou found somewhat of Jesus.

I mean not Him as He is, but a shadow of Him ; for the better that thou findest Him, the more shalt thou desire Him.

Then observe by what manner of prayer, or meditation, or exercise of devotion thou findest greatest and purest desire stirred up in thee to Him, and most feeling of Him, by that kind of prayer, exercise or work seekest thou Him best, and shalt best find Him.

Therefore if it come into thy mind, asking as it were of thyself: What hast thou lost, and what seekest thou? lift up thy mind, and the desire of thy heart to Jesus Christ, though thou be blind, and canst see naught of His Godhead, and say that: Him hast thou lost, and Him wouldst thou have, and nothing but Him, to be with Him where He is. No other joy, no other bliss in heaven or in earth but Him.

VI

This holy Advent is not a literal repetition of Jesus Christ, but a shedding of the rays of His brotherliness on all the earth.

As long as Jesus findeth not His image reformed in thee, He is strange, and the farther from thee; therefore frame and shape thyself to be arrayed in His likeness, that is, in humility and charity, which are His liveries, and then will He know thee, and familiarly come to thee, and acquaint thee with His secrets.

Thus saith He to His disciples: Whoso loveth Me, he shall be loved of My Father, and I will manifest Myself unto him.

There is not any virtue nor any good work that can make thee like to our Lord without humility and charity, for these two above all others are most acceptable to Him, which appeareth plainly in the gospel, where our Lord speaketh of humility thus: Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble in heart.

He saith not: Learn of Me to go barefoot, or to go into the desert, and there to fast forty days, nor

yet to choose to yourselves disciples (as I did), but learn of Me meekness, for I am meek and lowly in heart.

Also of charity He saith thus : This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I loved you, for by that men shall know you for My disciples.

Not that you work miracles, or cast out devils, or preach, or teach, but that each one of you love one another in charity.

If therefore thou wilt be like Him, have humility and charity. Now thou knowest what charity is, namely, To love thy neighbour as thyself.

VII

The holy, substantial, real, and entire begetting and interplacing of Christ instead of our own unbrotherly selves.

Do as I have said, and better if thou canst, and I hope by the grace of Jesus thou shalt make the devil ashamed, and shalt break down all such wicked stirrings, that they shall not much trouble thee.

And by this course may the image of sin be broken down in thee and destroyed, by the which thou art misshapen from the kindly shape of Christ's image; and thou shalt be reformed and shapen again to the image of Humanity of Jesus, by humility and charity, and afterwards shalt thou become full shapen to the image itself of the Godhead, whilst thou livest here, as it were in a shadow of it in contemplation, and hereafter in verity and full reality in the bliss of heaven.

Of this shaping to the likeness of Christ St. Paul speaks thus: My little children whom I travail with again (as a woman that were with child with you) until Christ be shapen again in you.

Thou hast conceived Christ within thee by faith, and He liveth in thy soul by grace, inasmuch as thou hast a good will and a desire to serve Him and please Him ; but He is not yet fully shapen in thee, nor thou in Him by perfection of charity.

And therefore St. Paul bare you and me and others also with travail, as a woman beareth a child, until the time that Christ hath His full shape in us, and we in Him.

VIII

When we have searched the world and found what the existing desire of the new nations is, that desire is the Future Christ. From henceforth we are the "reasonable instruments" through which in a Spiritual Incarnation this new but yet the selfsame Jesus is embodied in humanity.

If thou wouldst know, then, what this desire is, verily it is Jesus, for He worketh this desire in thee, and giveth it thee; and He it is that desireth in thee, and He it is that is desired; He is all, and He doth all, if thou couldst see Him.

Thou dost nothing, but sufferest Him to work in thy soul, and assentest to Him with great gladness of heart, that He will vouchsafe to do so in Thee.

Thou art nothing else but a reasonable instrument by which and in which He worketh; and therefore when thou feelest thy thoughts, through the touching of grace, taken up with the desire of Jesus, with a mighty devout will, for to please Him and love Him, then think that thou hast Jesus, for He it is that thou desirest.

Behold Him well, for He goeth before thee, not

in bodily shape, but insensible, by secret presence of His power.

Therefore see Him spiritually if thou canst, and fasten all thy thoughts and affections to Him, and follow Him wheresoever He goeth; for He will lead thee the right way to Jerusalem, that is, to the sight of peace and contemplation.

Thus prayed the Prophet to the Father of Heaven, saying: Send out Thy light and Thy truth (that is, Thy Son Jesus), and He shall lead me (by desire in me) to Thy holy hill and to Thy holy hill and to Thy tabernacles; that is, to the feeling of perfect love and height of Contemplation.

IX

That Heaven is the second, the universal, the spiritual Incarnation of "Jesus God" all in humanity.

WHAT, then, is Heaven to a reasonable soul? Verily naught else but Jesus God. For if that be Heaven only that is above all things, then is God only Heaven to man's soul, for He alone is above the nature of a soul.

Then if a soul can through grace have knowledge of that blessed nature of Jesus verily he seeth Heaven, for he seeth God.

Therefore there be many men that err in understanding of some words that are spoken of God, for that they understand them not spiritually.

Holy Writ saith that a soul that will find God must lift her inward eye upward, and seek God above itself. Then some men that would do after this saying understand this word above themselves to signify the placing or setting of a thing in place and worthiness above another, as one element or planet is above another in situation and worthiness of a bodily place.

But it is not so taken spiritually, for a soul is

above each bodily thing, not in place or sight, but in purity and worthiness of nature. Right so in the same manner God is above all bodily and spiritual creatures, not in place and sight, but in purity and worthiness of His unchangeable blessed nature.

And therefore he that will wisely seek God, and find Him, he must not run out with his thoughts as if he would climb above the sun, and part the firmament, and imagine the Majesty like to a hundred suns.

But he must rather draw down the sun, and all the firmament, and forget it, and cast it beneath him where he is, and set all this and all bodily things also at naught; and then, if he can, think spiritually both of himself and of God also. And if he do thus then seeth the soul above itself, then seeth it into heaven.

Upon this manner shall this word within be understood. It is commonly said that a soul should see our Lord within all things and within itself.

True it is that our Lord is within all creatures, but not on that manner that a kernel is hid within the shell of a nut; or as a little bodily thing is contained within a greater.

But He is within all creatures, as holding and preserving them in their being, through the subtlety and power of His own blessed nature and purity invisible.

For even as a thing that is most precious and most clean is laid innermost, right so by the same likeness it is said that the nature of God, which is most precious, most clean, most goodly, most remote from bodily substance, is hid within all things.

And therefore he that will seek God within, he must first forget all bodily things, for all such things are without; and also his own body; and he must forget thinking of his own soul, and think on the uncreated nature, that is, Jesus, Who made him, quickeneth him, holdeth him, and giveth him reason, memory, and love, the which is within him through His power and sovereign subtlety.

Upon this manner must the soul do when grace toucheth it, or else it will but little avail to seek Jesus, and to find Him within itself, and within all creatures as methinketh.

X

Our desire for this new appearing of Jesus is wholly of the Holy Ghost.

THIS is the love of God that I spake of, which thou shouldst covet and desire ; for this love is God Himself and the Holy Ghost. This love uncreated, when it is given to us, it worketh in our souls all that good is, and all that belongeth to goodness.

This love loveth us before we love Him, for it cleanseth us first from our sins, it maketh us to love Him, and maketh our wills strong to withstand all sins, and stirreth us up to exercise ourselves through divers exercises both bodily and ghostly in all virtues.

It stirreth us up also to forsake sin and carnal affections and worldly fears. It keepeth us from malicious temptations of the enemy, and driveth us out from business and vanities of the world, and from the conversation of worldly lovers.

All this doth the uncreated love of God when He giveth Himself for us ; we do right naught but suffer Him and assent to Him ; for that is the

most that we do to assent willingly to His gracious working in us.

And yet it is not that will from and of ourselves but of His making, so that methinketh He doth in us all that is well done and yet we see it not.

And He not only doth all this, but afterwards this love doth more, for He openeth the eye of the soul, and sheweth to the soul the sight of Jesus wonderfully, and the knowledge of Him as well as the soul can suffer it by little and little ; and by that sight He ravisheth all affections of the soul to Him, and then beginneth the soul to know Him spiritually and to love Him burningly.

Then seeth the soul somewhat of the nature of the blessed Divinity of Jesus, how that He is all, and that He worketh all, and that all good deeds that are done and good thought are only of Him, for He is all-sovereign might and all-sovereign verity and all-sovereign goodness. And therefore every good deed is done of Him and by Him.

And He alone shall have the worship and the thanks for all good deeds, and nothing else but He, for though wretched man steal His worship here for a while, yet at the last end shall verity shew full well that Jesus did all, and man did right naught of himself. And then shall the thieves of God's goods that are not reconciled to Him here in this life be judged to death for their sins.

And Jesus shall be fully worshipped and thanked of all blessed creatures for His working.

This love is nothing else but Jesus Himself, that for love worketh all this in man's soul and reformeth it in feeling to His likeness, as I have said before, and somewhat more shall say.

This love bringeth into the soul the perfection of all virtues, and maketh it all clean and true, soft and easy, and turneth it all into love and into liking. And in what manner He doth that I shall tell thee a little hereafter.

This love draweth the soul from the vain beholding of worldly things into Contemplation of spiritual creatures and of the secrets of God, from sensuousness into spirituality, from earthly feeling into heavenly savour.

XI

The Holy Ghost and the excision of the substance of unbrotherliness within the bodily life.

THE soul is made humble, as I understand, by the working of the Holy Ghost, that is, the gift of love; for He openeth the eye of the soul to see and love Jesus, and He keepeth the soul in that sight restfully and securely; and He slayeth all the stirrings of pride wonderfully and privily and softly, though the soul knoweth not how.

Also He bringeth in by that way verily and lovely the virtue of humility.

All this doth love, but not in all lovers alike fully; for some have this grace but short and little, as it were, in the beginning of it, and a little assaying toward it; for the conscience is not yet cleansed fully through grace.

And some have it more fully, for they have clearer sight of Jesus, and they feel more of this love. And some have it most fully, for they have the full gift of Contemplation.

Nevertheless, he that hath the least on this manner that I have said, I hope verily that he hath the gift of perfect humility, for he hath the gift of perfect love.

XII

We must covet to be with, to bear, to bring forth, the Spiritual Parousia.

We should ever covet to feel the lively inspiration of grace made by the spiritual presence of Jesus in our souls, if we could; and we should covet to have Him in our sight with reverence, and ever feel the sweetness of His love by a wonderful familiarity of His presence.

This should be our life and our feeling in grace after the measure of His gift in Whom all grace is, to some more and some less; for His presence is felt in divers manners as He pleaseth.

And in this we should live and work that which belongeth to us to work, for without this we should not be able to live spiritually.

For as the soul is the life of the body, right so is Jesus the life of the soul by His gracious presence.

And, nevertheless, this manner of feeling, though it be never so much, is by faith in comparison with that which shall be of the selfsame Jesus in the bliss of heaven.

Lo, this feeling should we desire; for every

reasonable soul ought to covet, with all its powers, to approach to Jesus, and to be united to Him through feeling of His gracious invisible presence.

How that presence is felt may better be known by experience than by any writing; for it is the life and the love, the might and the light, the joy and the rest of a chosen soul.

And, therefore, he that hath once truly felt it cannot forbear it without pain, neither can he choose but desire it, it is so good in itself and so comfortable.

What is more comfortable here for a soul than to be drawn out through grace from the noisomeness of the worldly business and filth of desires, and from vain affection of all creatures, into rest and softness of spiritual love, secretly perceiving the gracious presence of Jesus, and feelingly fed with the savour of His invisible blessed Face?

Verily, I think nothing can make the soul of a lover full of mirth but the graciousness of Jesus, as He can shew Himself to a pure soul; such an one is never heavy, never sorry but when he be with himself in sensuality.

He is never full glad, nor merry, but when he is out of himself as being with Jesus in spirit.

XIII

In the midst of the Spiritual Advent the living voice of Jesus will be heard again.

Our Lord Jesus saith thus of His lovers: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they know Me." The privy voice of Jesus is full true, and it maketh a soul true; there is no feigning in it, nor any fancy, nor pride, nor hypocrisy; but gentleness, humility, peace, love, and charity. And it is full of life, love, and grace.

Therefore when it soundeth in a soul, it is of so great power sometimes, that the soul suddenly layeth aside all that was in hand, as praying, speaking, reading, or thinking; in the manner abovesaid, and all manner of bodily work, and listeneth thereto fully, hearing and perceiving in rest and in love the sweet sound of this spiritual voice.

As it were, ravished now from the mind of all earthly things, and in this quiet, Jesus sometimes sheweth Himself as an awful Master, and sometimes as a reverend Father, and sometimes as a lovely Spouse.

It keepeth a soul in a wonderful reverence, and in a lovely beholding of Him, that the soul liketh well then, and never so well as then ; for it feeleth so great security, and so great rest in Jesus, and so much savour of His goodness, that it would be ever so, and never do other work.

It thinketh that it toucheth Jesus, and through virtue of that unspeakable touching it is made whole and staple in itself, reverently beholding Jesus only, as if there was nothing but Jesus, one thing, and himself another, borne up only by the savour and the wonderful goodness of Him ; that is that thing which he feeleth and seeth.

And this feeling is ofttimes without special beholding of Holy Writ, and with but few words formed in the mind; only there falls in among sweet words, according to the feeling either of loving, or worshipping, or admiring, or otherwise sounding, as the heart liketh.

The soul is very much separated from love or liking of the world, through virtue of this gracious feeling, and also very much from minding of the world in that time. It taketh no heed thereof, for it hath no time thereto.

But then sometimes anon, together with this, falleth into a soul divers illuminations through grace, which I call the speakings of Jesus and the sight of spiritual things; for be thou assured, that all the business that Jesus maketh about a

soul, is for to make it a perfect true spouse to Him in the height and the fullness of love, and that cannot be done suddenly.

Therefore Jesus, Who is love, and of all lovers the wisest, proveth by many ways, and by many wonderful means, ere this can come about. And, therefore, that it may come to the effect of true espousing, He hath such gracious speakings of a wooer to a chosen soul.

He sheweth His privy jewels; many things He giveth, and more He promiseth; and sheweth courteous dalliance. He often visiteth her with much grace and spiritual comfort, as I have said before; but how He doth this in particular, I cannot fully tell thee, for it needeth not.

XIV

All the creatures conspire with God towards this Social Paradise.

THE remembrance of the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of our Lord in all His creatures; forasmuch as we, living here on earth, cannot see God fully, and as He is in His essence, therefore we are to see and behold Him, love and fear Him upon the sight and consideration of His creatures and His works; and in them also are we to admire and wonder at His power and goodness.

It is well, also, to think on the mercy of our Lord, and on how He hath shewed to me and to thee, and to all sinful captives that sometimes were in bondage to the devil, through the greatness and multitude of our sins.

It is well to think on how He patiently suffered us to live in our sin and in our heinous contempts of Him, and on how He worked no revenge on us for the same, as He most justly might have done, and might most worthily have cast us down headlong into hell, had His love not hindered Him.

Out of love He spared us, and sent His grace

into our souls, taking us out of the state of heinous sins, and by His grace hath turned our will entirely unto Him, and made us thereby, for the having of Him, and for His love, to forsake all manner of sin.

The remembrance of His mercy and goodness, in these and in other matters and points more and greater than I can now reckon up, may justly cause and bring into a soul a great truth and confidence in our Lord, and a full hope of salvation, and greatly inflameth the desire of love to aspire to the joys of heaven.

COMMUNION IN BEING

COMMUNION IN BEING

THE HOLY INTERCHANGE

PART I

GREEK THEOLOGICAL PIETY CONCERNING THE REAL AND SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE OF HUMANITY INTO LIVING SOCIAL CHRISTLINESS BY THE EUCHARIST

THE Fellowship of the Inner Shrine is itself the effect of the Holy Eucharist, in a sense which gave some of the Mystics the semblance of being perpetual Eucharists of Christ.

Saint Francis has been rightly called by a Catholic writer, the "Christ of Umbria"; by which it was meant that his social activities were a gleam of the manifest Return of the Master through His Disciples by a triumph of inner Eucharistic assimilation.

The Catholic Tradition treats of the reality of Christ in the Church in the high analogy of our

treatment of a precious substance, or an unpurchasable jewel, which must, above all else, be kept safely and held fast.

This precious substance, the Jewel of the World, is the real Impression of Christ; which, granted it is safely preserved, is predestined to be the medium through which all the chosen disciples of Christ are themselves to become the "Social Christs"; and without which there could be no Return of the Master in any visible or manifest sense.

For this reason it is vain to try and find Christ in any pure "Doctrine of the Word" only. The chief thing is to preserve intact His true Impression, which is life-giving because it was stamped by God, and which is a purifier of Doctrine because it contains the Author Itself of Faith.

The Holy Eucharist is simply the Sacrament through which the spiritual realism of this Impression continues in the world, in spite of the Death of Christ, by aid of the institutional realism of Orders and priestly Consecration.

The Eucharist shows forth the Death of Christ until His Return in His visible presence, for it was the method in which Christ lived on in the earth, in spite of His Death. The Eucharist is therefore the medium through which our loss of Christ's visible presence through Death will be made good; because Christ, through the Euchar-

ist, assimilates men to Himself until His Saints are as His visible presence in the world.

In this section of the work we must be satisfied with more abstract language. Both Greek and Latin Doctors show plainly that the Eucharist was no mere "remembrance" of Christ, but was the virtual Second Advent, enclosing the living, true, and real substance of Christ. To them His living Impression abided in the Eucharist in secret, until men should yield themselves to be so impressed with It that they would humbly bear the King of Glory into the visible world to repeat His wonted acts of comfort and beneficence in the New Galilee of every familiar city, and mountain, and lake-side, and plain.

The Greeks teach this doctrine in a whole and entire manner, dwelling especially on the way in which Christ's Impression, having appropriated the elements, subsequently appropriates human lives when these have received the Impression borne in the elements.

The Latins concur, although the true doctrine of the Spiritual Advent of Christ in the social world is secluded under views about Transubstantiation. Of course there is a change of substance, in and through the Eucharist; but the real incidence of this change is in the act through which Christ's Impression, having appropriated the elements of bread and wine, appropri-

ates now the living elements of humanity itself in order to control the social destinies of the earth and impress the world with Christliness.

The Mystic does not dispute with the theologians, but sums the Catholic Religion as the living substance of Christ, through Whom all things in all the worlds cohere. If the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist means that it gives us this Christ, then it means all that the Mystic cares to know about; and if the Eucharist does not mean the veritable Advent of the Real Christ in order that the receiver himself may be stamped with Christliness and show forth Christ's brotherliness to all the world, then no teaching about the Eucharist can mean to the Mystic anything whatsoever.

But the happy and blessed truth about the Catholic Tradition is that Greek and Latin Doctors concur in teaching all that is thus required in order to renew the Universe after the Mind and Heart of Christ.

I

How Christ, living in the congregation, appropriates the elements of bread and wine in order to give Himself a bodily reality in us and make our moral self His own moral self.

THE Word of God, Who is both God and Word, was mingled with man's nature, and came to be in our body; yet did not take any other strange new composition for (His) human nature, but gave continuance to His own body by the usual and (familiar) means, strengthening His substance by meat and drink.

And then, as in our case, he that seeth the bread in a certain way looketh at the human body; because that bread, about to come to this body, becomes this body; so, in that case too, the body that received God, having received the food of bread, was, we may say, in a certain mode of speech, the same with the food, which itself had been transferred to the nature of the body.

For that which is peculiar to all human flesh, was present in the flesh of Christ, which also was continually receiving its strength by bread.

But the body of Christ was transmade to the flesh of God by the indwelling of God the Word.

I do well then in believing that now also the bread of God the Word, when consecrated, is being transmade into the body of God the Word; for that body also was bread by the nutritive power of bread, and it was sanctified by the indwelling of the Word that tabernacled in flesh.

Surely then because, by God, the bread was transmade within the body of Christ into Divine power; by the same God, a like thing now also comes to pass.

For as in that case the grace of the Word made for itself a holy body, to which its confirmation came by bread, and it was in a certain way itself bread; so here also, as the Apostle says, the bread "is sanctified by God's Word and by the entreaty," as has been said by the Word itself: "This is My body."

His Divine flesh received this part also into its composition, and the manifested Word thus mingled Himself with the fated nature of man, in order that, by the communication of the Godhead, man might be rendered Divine with Him.

He sows His own self, through the flesh, in those that have believed in the economy of the gift whose composition is of wine and bread.

Being now thoroughly mingled with the bodies of them that have believed; man, by the union

with the immortal Man, also may become partaker of His immortality.

But these things He bestows by the power of "the blessing" (in celebrating the Supper), having transelemented the nature of things that do appear.

St. Gregory of Nyssa.

II

The Theology of the Creation of a Christlike Social World.

WHAT we call the body of our Lord and God, of which we partake in the Eucharist, brethren, is the body itself which He received of our substance, which He took to Himself from the unstained and God-bearing (virgin).

For we do not acknowledge two bodies to Christ. His body is but one, and He offered but one sacrifice on our behalf to our God and Father.

For although we are also oftentimes offering the unbloody sacrifice, because in every place and time every faithful man partakes both of the Divine body and blood, yet it is the selfsame sacrifice.

We then are offering the same sacrifice, the same Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world; since if that body were one and this were another, many sacrifices and not one would be offered for us (Heb. VII.).

And now since Christ is our Head we also have become of one body with Him and His body is

in a state of perpetual increase; and we have become of one body with Him by partaking of His body and of His blood (Matt. xxvi.).

Instead of the natural arrangement, the bread and the wine, with water, have, by His word, become His body and blood.

As His body was, before the resurrection, corruptible, broken, eaten, and drunk, it is now however incorruptible. For what reason has He made this to be after the resurrection, and not before the resurrection, seeing that on account of the incorruptibility of the resurrection, He [in His risen body] is not broken nor eaten nor drunk.

Yet [in one sense] this body and blood of our God, of which we partake, *is* corruptible, broken, and poured out, eaten and drunk.

For as the increase of our body fulfils all the natural economy of the composition of the body from the beginning, so also the fulfilment of the holy mysteries fulfils all the spiritual and supernatural economy of the incarnation of God the Word.

It was necessary then, also, in the increase of the Lord's body to behold all the Divine economy of His incarnation and crucifixion and burial and incorruption. For the body of the Lord was not incorruptible from the beginning, but corruptible and capable of suffering until the resurrection: but after His burial now in us, it has become in-

corruptible; having, by the Divine power, risen from the dead, and having resolved for us the question, How then did it become so?

The priest says, as the angel said, That the Holy Ghost may come upon and sanctify and make this bread the body of Christ, and this cup Christ's precious blood, and not on account of a natural economy.

Then it is lifted up in the hands of the priest as upon the cross; but until our partaking of it, it endures all the accidents of corruption, and is broken by us with honour and in faith; and by the hands of the lawless is often both dishonoured and cast about; but it does not utterly perish nor passes into non-existence. For it is being invisibly collected into one body.

St. John of Damascus.

III

How each and all are to become the living Social Eucharists of Christ.

SINCE humanity is of two parts, it is a necessity for him that is being led on to life, to follow those that are saving it in both its parts.

Surely then the life that is gained by being mingled with Him through faith takes the starting-points of salvation from it.

The unification with "the life" is a participation of "the life." But the body comes into society with, and is itself mingled with, Him that saves it in another manner.

For, as those who, through the ill design of another, have taken poison extinguish the destructive power of the poison by another drug; so, as we have eaten for ourselves that which dissolves our nature, it is necessary, as we have come to new need of Him Who brings together that which has been dissolved, that such an antidote should come unto us and drive away from us the injurious poison that was previously inserted in the body.

What then is this? No other than that that body which was shewn to be superior to death has also achieved the beginnings of our life.

For since a little leaven, as the apostle says, changes and assimilates the whole lump to itself; so the body of Christ, which was, by God's allowance, put to death, having come to be in our body, transmakes and transfers it all into its own character.

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA.

IV

The Eucharist is a living embodiment of the Social Resurrection into the form and likeness of the Son of Man.

ALL communicants have that which is according to His likeness, but not that which is according to His nature.

Men have not that which is according to His nature in an equal degree with God.

For God is incomprehensible, and is not to be grasped by the understanding, being Himself a spirit.

But we do not deprive men of the things which God has defined; for God is true, Who in grace endowed men with that which is according to His image, and with whatever of the like He has.

For we see, indeed, that the Saviour took bread into His own hand, that He rose up in the supper and spake these things, and gave thanks and said: This is My body before you.

And none disbelieves the word, for he that

believeth not in Him truly there, as St. Paul said, "falleth from grace."

But whatever we may have heard, we shall believe that it is of Him; and we know that our Lord is entirely intelligence, entirely God, entirely a source of motion, entirely energy, entirely unutterable; and yet that He has, in grace, presented this to us.

For also that body was bread through His power, being consecrated by the tabernacling in it of the same Word that itself tabernacled among us in the flesh.

Surely, then, since bread in that body was transmade and transmuted into a Divine power, now also through the bread an equal wonder comes to pass.

Since, then, the flesh also of that (Jesus) which received God received this portion unto its own constitution, the manifested Word, on this account, mingled Himself with the fated nature of man, in order that human nature might, by communion with the Godhead, be deified with it.

On this account, by the dispensation of grace He sows Himself through the flesh in all that have believed, who by bread and wine consist; fully mingling Himself with the bodies of them that have believed, that man also by his unification with that which is immortal, might become

partaker of His incorruption. But He gives these things by the power of the blessing (or consecration of the elements) in transelementing the nature of the elements that appear to our senses into that body of Himself.

St. Epiphanius.

V

The Eucharist draws all men and fashions them directly and immediately into Beloved Disciples.

THIS Word and God then, being perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood; being naturally the wisdom and power of the Father; being without body as God; (yet) on account of our salvation built for Himself a body in the womb of Mary, the mother of God, without intercourse with a man.

He became a man, and made Himself a pattern of all virtue, that those that wish to follow Him throughout may have a full representation as by a divine track (to follow).

Being likened to this representation, they become partakers of the Divine nature as (Peter) the vessel of election says.

Therefore after His suffering and His resurrection, He that is the Wisdom and the Power, the Word and God, sent the apostles (His messengers) to all the unlearned and the heathen, that did not know God, having set before them a table, i.e. the holy altar, and on it bread of heaven, and

immortal, and that giveth life to all that partake of it.

His holy and all-holy body [is there], and wine that gladeneth the heart and implanteth sobriety in the soul of each of those that are born of Him, Who has mixed His own blood as into a bowl, and has summoned by His apostles those that are both called and elected.

They indeed give over all folly: but He shews forth as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven those that obey His voice.

ST. ATHANASIUS.

VI

The Holy Eucharist moves us towards the whole and entire Brotherhood of Man in Christ the Spiritual Commonwealth.

We ask and say, "Give us our daily bread today." And this can be understood both in a spiritual and in a natural sense, because also both ways of understanding it are, by Divine benefit, profitable to salvation.

For Christ is the bread of life, and bread here is not that which all have, but it is "our" bread.

And just as we call Him "Our Father," because He is the Father of those that understand and believe, just so we also call (the bread) "our bread," because Christ is the bread of those who attain to His body.

But we request that this bread may be given to us "daily," lest we, who are in Christ and who daily receive the Eucharist for the food of salvation, may be separated from the body of Christ, while we hold aloof, and by not communicating, be forbidden the celestial bread (John VI.).

When then He says "that he lives for ever,

whoever shall eat of His bread, etc.," it is manifest that those live who touch His body, and receive the Eucharist with the right to partake of it.

So, on the other hand, it is to be feared and prayed that no one, held aloof and separated from the body of Christ, may remain far off from salvation (John VI.).

And for this reason we ask that "our bread," i.e. Christ, may be given us daily; that we that abide and live in Christ may not go back from His sanctification and body.

ST. CYPRIAN.

VII

The Eucharist is the beginning of the bodily reality of the social transformation of all humanity into Christ-liness.

THE Word is everything to the infant (the believer), both father and mother and servant and nurse. "Eat My flesh," saith He, "and drink My blood."

These aliments of His house, indeed, the Lord supplies, and hands us flesh, and sheds blood, that nothing be wanting to His children for (their) growth.

O the strange mystery! He enjoins on us to put off the old and carnal corruption, as also our old food; and partaking of another, a new one, the diet of Christ, to take Him up as far as it is possible, and lay Him up in ourselves; and to enshrine the Saviour in our breast, that we may put in order the passions of our flesh.

But you are not willing to understand it in this way, but in a more common way, perhaps. Hear it in this way too. The Holy Spirit speaks to us

of flesh in an allegory, for also by Him has (our) flesh been created.

Blood suggests to us the Word: for also His rich blood has been shed on His (sacrificed) life.

But the mixture of both is the Lord, the food of (His) infants, the Lord, the Spirit and the Word. The food is the Lord Jesus, the Word of God, spirit dwelling in flesh, and sanctified heavenly flesh.

ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

VIII

The Eucharist is the Central Heart of the transformation of the existing earth into the Social Paradise.

COMING to suffer that He might declare to Abraham and to those that inherit with him the good tidings of the opening of the inheritance; holding the cup in His hand He gave thanks, and drank of it and gave it to His disciples.

He will also Himself give them a new inheritance of the land, and renew the mystery of the glory of the sons; as David says: "Who renews the face of the earth."

He promised to drink of the produce of the vine with His disciples; shewing two things, both their inheriting the land in which the new produce is to be drunk, and the resurrection of His sons in the body.

For the body of flesh which rises anew, is the same that received the new cup (at the Institution).

For neither can He be understood to be set in a place above the heavens when He drinks the fruit of the vine; nor again are they destitute of fleshly bodies who drink it with Him. For the drink taken from the vine belongs to those that have flesh and not spirit only.

ST. IRENÆUS.

IX

The Eucharist brings forth the Social Resurrection for all mankind and solidifies the heavenly with the earthly life.

How say they that the flesh goes to corruption and partakes not of the life that is nourished from the body of the Lord and His blood? Let them either change their opinion, or refuse to bring forward the things that they have said.

For our opinion is in harmony with the Eucharist; and the Eucharist moreover establishes our opinion, since these offer to Him His own, carefully proclaiming our communion and unification with Him, and confessing the raising of our flesh and spirit.

For as bread from the earth, receiving the call of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting both of the earthly and of the heavenly, so our bodies also, partaking of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, and bear with them the hope of resurrection for (eternal) ages.

That same word gave the people an order for

making oblations (although He did not need them), that they might learn to serve God. He wills us also to offer a gift at the altar in our assemblies without intermission.

There is moreover an altar in the heavens, for thither our prayers and oblations are directed, and a temple after the manner that St. John implies in the words of the Apocalypse: "And the Temple of God was opened"; there is also a tabernacle, for he said: "Behold the tabernacle of God, in which He dwells with men."

St. Irenæus.

X

The Eucharist is the initial transmutation of the Creation into a completed earthly, spiritual, social, everlasting Paradise, ruled by Christliness.

We are members of Him, and, through the creature, are nourished; He Himself supplying us with the creature, Who makes His sun to rise and rain to fall as He will.

He here confesses the cup from His creature to be His own blood, and the bread from the creature to be His own body, from which our bodies obtain increase.

Whenever then the singled liquid and the bread receive to themselves the Word of God, which is eternal life, the Eucharist becomes the body of Christ; and if out of these the substance of our bodies increases and consists, how do men say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God, which is eternal life; since the flesh is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord, and is a member of Him?

The blessed Paul says in the Epistle to the Ephesians that we are members of His body of

the flesh and bones. He does not say this concerning any spiritual and unseen body, which hath not either bones or flesh, but concerning our true manhood, which consists of flesh and muscles and bones; and which, too, is nourished out of His cup which is His blood.

ST. IRENÆUS.

XI

The Eucharist possesses an illimitable (i.e. divine) social transformative power.

THE Eucharist is called an assumption (metalepsis) because by it we partake of the Deity of Jesus. But it is both called and truly is a communion on account of our having fellowship with Christ by it and partaking both of His flesh and Godhead and having fellowship and being made one with each other by it. For since we partook from one bread, we all are one body of Christ and one blood and become members of one another, being called of God of the same body with Him.

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS.

XII

The Eucharist is the living and social transformative power which changes all humanity into Christliness.

1

THE Son cometh to be in us, bodily as man, being mingled and united with us by the mystical Eucharist; and He cometh again spiritually as God, re-creating our spirits to newness of life, by the energy and grace of His own Spirit, making us partakers of His own Divine nature.

Christ thus appears to be the bond of union between us and God the Father, joining us to Himself as man, and as God being naturally inherent in the Father.

For there was no other way in which the nature, which was subject to corruption, could be raised to incorruption than by the coming down into it of that Nature, which was superior to all corruption and mutability.

This incorrupt Nature raised up to its own good that which always lay depressed, and by communion and intermixture with itself, almost lifted

it out of those limits which pertain to created nature, by transforming to itself that which has no such native power.

We are perfectly changed therefore into oneness with God and the Father, because Christ becomes the Mediator between us.

For receiving into ourselves, both by the way of body and by the way of spirit, Him Who is naturally and truly the Son, consubstantially united to the Father, we have the glory of partaking of that nature which is above all things.

2

See, then, how He abides in us, and renders us superior to corruption by introducing Himself into our bodies through His own Flesh, which is real food; whereas that shadow, which was under the law (i.e. manna) and the service, which was connected with it, had no reality.

And the principle of this mystery is simple and true, not curiously devised for the service of impiety, but a simple truth.

For we believe that the Word, the Son of the Father, having united Himself to the Body born of the Holy Virgin, with a reasonable soul, the union being ineffable and mystical, rendered His Body life-giving.

He being Himself God, and the principle of life

by nature, made us partakers of Himself, not only in spirit, but in body, that He might render us superior to corruption, and do away, through Himself, with the law of sin, which was in our fleshly members, and thus, as it is written, "condemn sin in the flesh."

3

We approach the mystical Eucharist and are sanctified, being made partakers of the sacred Flesh and the precious Blood of our common Saviour Jesus Christ.

Now this we do, not as though we received common flesh. God forbid.

Nor as though His Flesh were that of a man who was sanctified, and united to the Word by oneness of desert, or in whom God abode by indwelling; but, as supposing it to be truly life-giving, and really the Flesh of the Word Himself.

For being naturally Life as God, since He has become one with His own Flesh, He has rendered it also life-giving. So that, when He says to us, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood," we cannot suppose this to be like the flesh of a man such as ourselves. For how should a man's flesh be naturally life-giving?

4

Even in Christ the flesh must not be thought of alone, and in itself, for it has united to it that Word Who is naturally life.

When, therefore, Christ calls it life-giving, it is not to it, so much as to Himself, or to His own Spirit, that He testifies that the life-giving power belongs.

For it is through Himself that His own Body is life-giving, since He reconstituted the elements of His nature through His own power.

How He did so neither can mind conceive nor tongue express, but we must admire with silence, and a faith which passes understanding.

5

If the flesh of the first man, made poisonous and mortal, communicates death to the soul, shall not the Flesh of Christ, which is healthful and life-giving, bestow upon it life and safety?

Therefore, as the soul contracts all its ill by flesh, it ought by Flesh to receive all its benefit. If it is to be freed from the evil which came to it by the flesh of the first man, it must have society and union with the Flesh of Christ, the Second Man.

And as by the single flesh of the first man all

souls are infected and destroyed, so are all souls washed, cleansed, and quickened by the Flesh of Christ.

As the flesh of the first man is the storehouse of all vices, sins, and crimes; so all virtues, all spiritual treasures, and all blessings are stored up in the Flesh of Christ.

As the former flesh separates the soul from God, and unites it with Satan; so the Flesh of Christ separates it from Satan, and unites it to God.

For as Satan lurks in the flesh of the first man, so the Godhead abides in the Flesh of the Second.

Therefore, when the soul is united and associated with the Flesh of Christ, it is associated and united with the Godhead. And as Satan takes possession of souls by the flesh of Adam, so by his own Flesh are they taken possession of by Christ.

St. Cyril.

PART II

THE THEOLOGICAL PIETY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ON THE EUCHARIST AS THE SUBSTANTIAL MEDIUM OF THE TRANSFUSION OF SOCIETY WITH CHRIST AND CHRISTLINESS

THEOLOGICAL NOTE ON THE EUCHARIST AND UNITY BY AQUINAS

THIS sacrament has a threefold significance:

1. Relative to the past it is commemorative of the Lord's passion, which was a true sacrifice; and thus also this sacrament is called a sacrifice.

2. Relative to the present, that is to the Church Unity in that men are gathered together in one by this sacrament, and which is therefore named a communion (synaxis). For John, the Damascene, says that it is called a communion because we communicate by the sacrament itself with Christ, and because we share His flesh and Divinity, and we who communicate are mutually united to one another also by the communion itself.

3. Respecting the future, inasmuch as this sacra-

ment is a prefiguration (or foretaste) of that fruition of God which will come to pass when we are in our fatherland, and for which reason it is also called the Viaticum, because this sacrament shews us the way thither. For a like reason it is also called the Eucharist (or offering of thanks), because the grace of God is life eternal (Rom. VI. 23); or because it really contains Christ, Who is "full of grace."

This sacrament is called in the Greek "an assumption," that is, a taking to, because, as (John the) Damascene says, by the same we take to ourselves the Deity of the Son.

I

The Eucharist seals the Atonement.

St. Gregory says: "Our Lord, the Good Shepherd, gave His life for the sheep, that in our Sacrament He might give us His Body and Blood, and that He might feed, with the nourishment of His own Flesh, the sheep whom He had redeemed."

In this is the highest expression of His bounty and His love. It is a great thing to give Himself as the companion of our pilgrimage and the servant of our necessities. It is a greater thing to give Himself as the price of our redemption. Still this gift is in a certain kind of separation from him to whom it is given.

When, however, He gives Himself for food, He is not given in any kind of separation, but for union in every way. For thus the food and the feeder are joined together in unity of body. In this step, therefore, we see the highest bountifulness of the goodness of God.

II

The clear and orthodox, but enclosed, doctrine of the Eucharistic Parousia.

In this sacrament the worthy receiver is made deiform, that is to say, by the grace of goodness or by the imitation of Christ he is made in a way like God. St. Ambrose says: "Because the Lord Jesus is partaker of Godhead and of flesh, thou also who dost receive His Body art made partaker of His divine substance by that food."

The substance of God is goodness. Thus, therefore, to partake of Him in this food is by grace to be likened to the goodness of God. But grace is the flowing of God's goodness into the soul, by which, being likened to God, it becomes pleasing to Him and worthy of everlasting life.

So great is the bountifulness of God that it is not enough for Him in this sacrament or in this food to enlighten the intellect, heal the will, gladden the memory, strengthen our whole nature in good, and join us to the mystical body; but further, He makes us like Himself—here by grace, and hereafter by glory. Beyond that we cannot go.

III

In the Eucharist we assume into our whole being the constraining Wisdom towards the eventual entire Brotherliness.

When two natures—that is to say, body and soul—are joined together in one person in friendly companionship and wondrous love, one food is needed for the salvation of both. This food must be at the same time spiritual and bodily, fitting for the whole man—that is, for each nature.

Such food is the Word made flesh, Whom in the same sacrament they both eat. By His power the soul is brought from misery to the deathless joy, and the body is kept for a while in the earth that at last it may rise in glory. The Flesh of our Lord is truly food for the whole man, good both for soul and body.

God created Wisdom by His Spirit. He assumed a body made of the body of our Lady, and united it to His own Wisdom. According to His gift, that is His bountifulness, He gives it as food to those that love Him, namely, the faithful, that, as has been said, it may profit them both to body and soul.

IV

When we partake of Christ we partake of a substantial fraternity with all men, which is first sealed in heaven and then will be fulfilled in the entire Social Commonwealth.

THOUGH our Lord's Body be in many places, in many Hosts, in many fragments of the Host, yet it is not divided into parts, but remains whole and undivided. The Apostle asks if Christ be divided; as much as to say that, though He is in heaven locally, in the hearts of the good spiritually, and in many places sacramentally, He is always one and whole.

The explanation of this miracle is the unspeakable union of God and man, of Flesh and the Word. For as the Word of God is everywhere, filling all heaven and the whole universe, yet remaining undivided, so He granted power to His Body to be undivided; that is the Body which he assumed of the Blessed Virgin and gave to His apostles.

As His Godhead is everywhere, it fills that body and unites it with itself, and brings it about that

as the Godhead is one, so the truth of the Body of Jesus is one Body in truth.

St. Augustine says: "When we eat Christ we do not make Him into parts; but in the Holy Sacrament He is that which each one receives. Each one receives his own part in this sacrament, but our Lord remains whole and undivided in Himself. He abideth whole and undivided in your heart.

"For He was altogether whole with the Father when He came to the Blessed Virgin; but when He filled her with Himself He did not go away from God. He came in the flesh, that men might feed upon Him; and yet, that He might feed the angels, He abode wholly with His Father."

We should therefore pray to our Lord that, though we may be bodily divided from one another, we may be always spiritually joined to Him in love. We should pray, too, that He will always so feed us sacramentally with Himself in this life that, with the angels, we may hereafter feed for ever on the unveiled vision of His face.

St. Augustine also says: "There cannot be any doubt that each one is made a partaker of the Body and Blood of the Lord, when he is made a member of Christ; nor can there by any doubt that such a one is not cut off from the fellowship of that Bread, if before he eat it he should die in the unity of the Body of Christ.

"For he cannot be deprived of the benefts of this Sacrament when he is found with that which this Sacrament signifies. But he is found with that which is signified by this Sacrament, when he is made a member of Christ and spiritually eats by believing and loving; for thus he is truly changed into Christ's Body, that he may live with Him for ever."

V

Intellectual and moral Eucharistic assimilation with the Son of Man.

We should have great delight in that inward sweetness which comes from assimilating Christ by spiritual eating. The souls of those who eat what is good, will, according to God's promise, be delighted in fatness, that is, in the sweetness of the grace and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Going into our house we should repose with wisdom, that is, with Jesus, God and man, for He is the true wisdom of God. No weariness will come in this to the faithful soul, but only joy and gladness, with refreshment and delight, because of the friendship of God. This spiritual sweetness will come to you in the silent joyfulness of your hearts. It is a foretaste of the heavenly joy, and of the delights that are for ever with God.

VI

The trans-making of men into "Social Christs."

When the Body of our Lord is worthily eaten by the faithful, that Body is not, like other food, changed, but, on the contrary, he who rightly eats it is changed spiritually into it. For our Lord makes him who eats Him a member of His Body, incorporates him with Himself by love; He thus unites him in the closest way with Himself, making him like an image of His own goodness. Now, that our Lord is not changed into us when we eat His Body, but that we are changed into Him, is proved by a threefold likeness:

1. Such is the strength of love, that the heart of the lover is changed into the heart of the loved one, that is, is made like the loved one in happiness and sorrow. Hugo says: "The might of love is so great that you cannot help being such as that is which you love, and to which you are joined by affection. You are in a sense changed into its likeness by a communion of love." Thus the Bride of Jesus longs to be a seal on the heart

of the divine Bridegroom. Likewise, pure, soft, she will receive an impression of that Heart. On the heart that is thus warm with the love of God, pure in its own cleanness, soft with the love of its neighbour, the Body of Jesus is laid as a seal; not that it should be changed into us, for it is unchangeable; but that we may be transfigured into the image of its goodness.

2. If you let fall a drop of water into a large vessel of wine, the water is altogether changed into wine because of the greatness of the wine; but the virtue of the Body of our Lord is of unspeakable greatness, and we, in comparison with it, are less than can be said. The greatness therefore of the might and sweetness of Jesus being poured into our hearts, which are very little and poor, absorbs them, and, making them fail from themselves, changes them into itself. We are then no longer like worldly men, nor even like ourselves; but we are like Jesus in will and word and holy lives.

3. If a shoot of a good tree be grafted on the stem of a wild tree, the natural goodness of the shoot has such power that it changes the natural bitterness of the wild tree into its own sweetness and goodness, so that the wild stem brings forth good fruit like the fruit of the tree from which the shoot was taken.

Thus the Body of Christ grafted into us takes

away our failings, and draws us into its own goodness. Then as He puts forth leafy branches, flowers, and fruits of justice, it gives us strength by Him to do the same.

The faithful heart leaves the bitterness of its own faults and sins by the might of the Body of its Lord, and then, like Him, brings forth the leafy branches and flowers and fruits of the Spirit. Thus Jesus draws us to Himself. He grafts us into His own Body that the root of bitterness may be in us no more. He draws us to God by the greatness of His love for us. Then the might and sweetness of His goodness win the victory over sin by working in us. This is the true life, when, as St. Paul says, Christ lives in us, and we live by Him Who died for us on the Cross.

CHRISTLY FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN

CHRISTLY FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN

THOMAS À KEMPIS

THE Social Spirit of all that follows is admirable, and shows how closely ascetic teachings, as of à Kempis, were always, in genuine Catholicity, associated with Social Service. Nevertheless our own manner of Social Service must not be modelled on that of a society which realised the Brotherhood of Man in an unconscious or implicit way. In our own age to put in practice Christly Fellowship towards men a reformation is first of all necessary, though this reformation should be a Christly change within ourselves, and not a vain political turmoil of outwardness. Every single social problem of humanity must in time be reached and solved by the guidance of the Christ within us, and in this sense there is nothing of Catholicity whose term is not Christly service for all mankind.

I

"Of the imitation of the life of the Saviour."

"As long as you did it to one of these, My brethren, you did it to Me!"

Observe these words, understand their mystery, and make use of them to regulate thine own conduct.

He who cometh to the assistance of his neighbour in a pressing need, or speaketh a word of comfort to one in misfortune, holdeth Jesus by the hand.

He who carrieth with patience some burden with which he hath been charged, beareth upon his shoulders Jesus Crucified.

He who weepeth over the sins of others, and asketh pardon for the guilty, washeth and wipeth the Feet of Jesus.

He who appeaseth an angry man, prepareth for Jesus a home in his heart.

He who, being at table, is occupied more about others than himself, offereth to Jesus a delicious honeycomb.

He who gathereth inspirations from on high, introduceth Jesus into a place of retreat in his own heart.

He who putteth into his brother's hand an edifying book, presenteth to Jesus an excellent wine.

He who is grieved to hear evil spoken of others, dresseth the wounds of Jesus.

He who maketh known the good example and virtues of his neighbour, offereth to Jesus most lovely flowers.

He who readeth with piety, and extendeth a knowledge of the teaching of Jesus, scattereth before Him sweet odours.

He who diminisheth the shame and the scandals attaching to others, veileth the nakedness of Jesus on the Cross.

He who loveth to recall the humility of Jesus, receiveth from Him milk and honey.

He who by his care helpeth a weak, sick brother, kneeleth with the angels near the Crib of Jesus.

He who prayeth with devotion and refuseth to himself something which nature demandeth, bringeth to Jesus—with the Magi—inestimable gifts.

He who procureth clean raiment for a poor neighbour, baptiseth Jesus in the Jordan, with Saint John the Baptist.

He who observeth silence, goeth into the desert with Jesus.

He who subdueth his passions and keepeth his body under strict discipline, fasteth with Jesus.

He who speaketh a good word to his brother, announceth—together with Jesus—the kingdom of God.

He who prayeth much for another that is tempted and afflicted, visiteth Lazarus with Jesus, and weepeth with Martha and Mary.

He who prayeth for the departed, followeth Jesus to the grave of Lazarus.

He who readeth before his brethren a spiritual book, is seated at table with Jesus and the Apostles.

He who layeth up in his heart the good things he hath perused, reposeth with Saint John on Jesus' Bosom.

He who is humble and resigned in suffering, accompanieth Jesus to the Mount of Olives.

He who prayeth with piety and perseverance in the time of tribulation and trial, wrestleth —by the side of Jesus in Gethsemane—with the devil.

He who entirely renounceth his own will, fulfilleth with Jesus the Will of His Father; and aideth Him in carrying His Cross to Calvary.

He who prayeth for his enemies, and at once forgiveth them, prayeth with Jesus on the Cross.

He who forsaketh the world, and heedeth not things visible, dieth with Jesus on the Cross, and like Saint Paul is caught up into Paradise.

He who guardeth his heart in peace and purity, wrappeth the Body of Jesus in fine linen, and burieth It in his own heart.

He who persevereth to the end in the service of Jesus, reposeth calmly in the tomb with Him.

He who compassionateth the sufferings of Jesus, receiveth His consolation, and that of His divine Mother.

He who keepeth in his heart the words and deeds of Jesus, prepareth for Him aromatic perfumes.

He who fervently and humbly thanketh Him for His gifts, goeth—like the Magdalene—with the sweet spices to the Sepulchre of Jesus.

He who, after confession, striveth to correct himself, riseth again with Jesus.

He who yieldeth not to sloth, but returneth to his labours with renewed zeal, celebrateth the Feast of Easter with Jesus, and singeth with Him its Alleluia.

He who despiseth the joys of the world, shunneth its dangers, and aspireth to a perfect life, retireth into the Cœnaculum with the disciple to serve God in recollectedness, to live free from the occasions of sin, and to receive the Holy Ghost.

He who holdeth in contempt all that is earthly,

and by holy meditation is lifted up to things celestial, ascendeth into heaven with Jesus.

Happy is he who saith: "Jesus is my life, it is joy for me to die!"

Assuredly it is difficult to leave all, and death hath its sufferings; but the reward is eternal, and it is bliss to reign with the Saviour.

"Oh! if I could but belong entirely to God, tending only towards Him, so as to be closely united to Him.

My soul! take courage: follow Jesus by a flight of charity, through faith which worketh by love, in order to be one day accounted worthy to see Him, face to face. Amen.

II

"Of Mutual Love."

"BEAR ye one another's burdens."

We are all one body in Jesus Christ: we should be therefore "careful to keep the unity of the spirit of charity in the bond of peace"; and to have a right understanding in all that is good.

We are the members of Jesus Christ, regenerated in Holy Baptism by the grace of the Holy Spirit; redeemed by the sufferings of Jesus Christ; purified by His blood, nourished with His Flesh, instructed by His Word, healed by His wounds, edified by His example.

How then can you, my brethren, injure one another, or thwart one another?

He who offendeth his neighbour in word or deed, offendeth Jesus Christ Himself.

The Lord will chastise you, if you do not hasten to amend.

We have but one Father, Who is in heaven; we are all brethren in Jesus Christ, wherever our native country may be—whatever may be our condition.

The Only God hath created us all, and is preparing us for one and the same future blessedness.

He calleth us every day by those voices, which may be either interior or exterior.

He hath given to us all this wonderful promise —that we shall one day see Him, and that for all eternity, in the company of the Angels and Saints.

If then we have all this same vocation, if we have all been redeemed with the same ransom, if all of us have been filled with the same Spirit, we ought to strive to love, and mutually serve each other.

If we would please our Lord, let us in charity pray for, and bear the burdens of one another; acting thus, we shall live in God, and He in us.

Let us interpret favourably all that we see in our neighbours which is defective; would we not wish that he should so do also in our regard?

Beloved brother, bear with others, and they will bear with thee; make excuses for others, and they will make excuses for thee.

Have pity on such as are in fault, and they will have pity on thee.

Console such as are in trouble, and thou wilt be thyself consoled.

Raise up those who fall, and the same will be done for thee.

God will cause that to be done for thee which thou hast done for others; and He judgeth and punisheth in accordance with justice.

Do not be astonished that man, being frail, falls often whilst in this miserable world; angels fell in heaven—and Adam in the terrestrial paradise, when tempted by means of a simple fruit.

An insignificant thing is often the cause of a violent temptation.

God, in His wisdom, permitteth this, in order to make us understand when we are not victorious over lesser temptations, that we have all the more reason to fear such as are more dangerous.

Pray—as thou wouldst pray for thyself—for all those who are in the midst of trials and tribulations.

Say thus to thy neighbour: "Thy welfare is my own, thy ills are mine also: I take part in them."

We are all weak: we ought then to intercede kindly, the one for the other.

None should censure others on account of their imperfections, without remembering their own.

To reproach one's neighbour contemptuously for his defects is to imitate a blind man, who mocketh at another who is blind; or a deaf man who laugheth at another who is deaf; or a foolish person who ridiculeth another equally foolish.

Do not talk about others, since thou art not

responsible for them; consider thine own miserable failures, and try to do better.

If thou wouldest judge of thy neighbour aright, and be the cause of his mending, begin first with thyself.

Shouldest thou deem it a duty to speak, do so without any appearance of agitation, but with modesty and reserve.

If thou dost entertain towards me a brotherly affection, thou wilt have compassion on my wretchedness and wilt pray for me.

To reprehend thy neighbour without praying for him—without shewing pity towards him—is to act, not as a charitable physician, but as an enemy—as an intolerable meddler.

Praying for others, as if one's self, hath a double merit.

The more charity one hath for one's neighbour, the more he prayeth for him. At the same time he obligeth himself to amend so that he may not offend the eye of him that is feeble.

One man may be to another as the sweet-scented rose, or as the rankling thorn.

III

Of the Christly compassion men should have towards the weak.

"HAVE a constant mutual charity among yourselves, for charity covereth a multitude of sins."

Despise not the weak in considering thyself to be steadfast; for no one can know what may happen, and whether he will persevere to the end.

All men are liable to err; all have need of mutual aid; all naturally prefer things which give pleasure, and dislike such as are irksome.

"Be ye therefore merciful," saith our Lord, "as your Father also is merciful."

Propose not to thyself to be rigidly exacting regarding others.

Shew not thyself astonished nor harsh, nor in haste to censure, when thou seest thy brother yielding to some frailty; endeavour rather to console and save him.

As Saint James writeth: "Mercy exalteth itself above judgment."

The excellent priest Florent had good reason to

say: "I have always obtained far more by gentleness than by rigour and harshness."

Besides, in giving the preference to gentleness, we are but conforming ourselves to the Saviour's teaching.

As thou dost act with regard to thy neighbour, in the same way will others act towards thee.

Whatever thou dost for thy weak, sick, afflicted brother, thou dost for Christ Himself, like the angels who reverently serve their Lord. Be then careful and deferential in thy behaviour towards others.

The humble man, who regardeth himself as simply nothing, is kind towards every one; he is merciful towards the poor, and pitiful towards the weak; he consoleth the afflicted, instructeth the ignorant, raiseth those who have fallen, supporteth those who are tottering.

Likewise shall he obtain grace and mercy now, and be rewarded throughout eternity.

IV

Some Lineaments of Eventual Union.

"THE multitude of believers had one heart and one soul in God."

Oh what a holy and joyful congregation was that in the primitive church, gathered together in the Holy Ghost, which could not be disquieted, as long as the unity of faith was kept entire in the bonds of charity.

The forsaking of property in point of our temporal fortunes; conformity in good manners; prompt obedience in subjects; an exemplary life in supporting a pious condescension to the infirmity of others; strict corrections of transgressions, and a due subordination in every office and charge, do most conduce to the perfect observance of charity.

And every one, to his utmost endeavour, stands obliged to advance the common good, that nothing may be wanting to the community, or otherwise may perish; to the end that charity may shine in all our works, and God may be highly glorified thereby. All these blessed things were first ob-

served by the holy apostles, and afterwards conveyed by their example to the rest of the faithful, but they are recommended in a more peculiar manner to religious persons, and the prelates of the Church.

For as long as an Apostolical life did shine in the head and members, they were accompanied with blessings and much grace universally. And because they sought God, and contemned earthly things, they received also an increase of temporal blessings, together with spiritual gifts.

They were even deemed so much more worthy of greater honour, by how much they had a more humble opinion of themselves, and reputed all human glory as a mere nothing. They used the blessings they received well and modestly, nor were they puffed up with pride by the dignities and benefices conferred upon them, but governed their subjects in great discipline, with a fatherly care and solicitude.

Again, taking much compassion on the poor and infirm, they most willingly afforded them assistance, and bestowed words of sweet consolation upon such as were afflicted and tempted. They repressed idle words in themselves and others, knowing that every one was liable to render an account at the day of judgment of the idle words that he had spoken.

V

Apostolic Brotherliness.

WHEREAS we are truly brethren in Christ, let us pray for one another, as brotherly charity exacts at our hands. Let us serve one another, support one another, admonish one another, comfort one another, rejoice with one another, and condole with one another. Let us strive to love one another as Christ loved us, and delivered Himself up for our love ; Who had much patience with us in point of our former sins, and to this hour bears with our imperfections through hope of our amendment, and that we might learn to take compassion of our neighbours, and patiently to bear with their imperfections. If we perform these things we shall fulfil the law of Christ—become His true disciples and His dearest friends—beloved by the Father, adopted by the Son, inflamed by the Holy Ghost, and predestined and elected by the whole blessed Trinity.

And then that may be said and verified of us, which is read in the Acts of the Apostles, concerning primitive Church: "The multitude of believers had one heart and one soul in God, and all was common among them." Amen.

VI

How to be in touch with God's Universe ("On Humility").

"LEARN of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart," saith our Lord.

The first amongst all masters, and all law-givers —Jesus Christ our Lord—exhorteth us to learn humility from Himself; he who keepeth himself humble, will soon attain to perfection; he who, wanting humility, imagineth that he is or knoweth something great, wasteth both his time and his trouble.

The principal lesson of our Lord is the lesson of humility.

Humility is the foundation of all virtues; it is necessary to life eternal.

He who desireth to possess grace in this life, and in the other life eternal glory, must apply himself to this divine lesson; he who hath a contempt for humility, spoileth and loseth all he doth.

May this teaching be well understood by all Christians, superiors and inferiors, high and low, learned and ignorant.

The Divine Saviour instructeth us to love, not that which is high, but that which is lowly; not that which is pleasing, but that which is useful; not the appearance, but the reality; not that which is earthly, but that which is heavenly.

Whosoever truly imitateth Christ will soon be perfect.

Humility was the distinctive virtue of our Saviour; it triumpheth over Satan, nevertheless the world hath but contempt for it.

He who hath this virtue in his heart, and by it shapeth his conduct, pleaseth God and the angels; he will come to a good end, for the Divine Saviour hath said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

VII

Returning to the New Testament Fellowship with Christ.

If thou wouldst have a friend to give true consolation to affliction, go to Jesus; approach His crib with the shepherds (Luke I.); come with the Magi, to adore Him in the arms of His Mother (Matt. II.); follow Him to the temple with Simeon and Anna (Luke II.); to the city with Martha (Luke x.); to the sepulchre, with Mary Magdalene (John xx.); or, filled with sentiments of the most sweet and lively joy, join the apostles in the upper chamber, to receive with them the Holy Spirit (Acts II.).

Blessed is he that, in these and other holy places, devoutly seeks Jesus, not in body only, but in spirit and in truth.

Blessed is he who, at all time, and in every place, seeketh Jesus from the bottom of his heart, and who burns with an ardent desire to enjoy His presence, and to prepare himself every day for the bright vision and presence of Christ.

Blessed is he who in his life follows Jesus to Calvary and bears his cross with Him; for his

divine Saviour shall assist him in his last hour, and he shall not fear the sentence of reprobation destined for the wicked.

Seek not only Jesus, but the disciples of Jesus; and love Jesus and all who, for His love, bear patiently the pains and sorrows of this life; for the love of Jesus and His friends maketh a man despise the world and driveth away all that is impure or vain.

Denounce then those friends, those acquaintances, those companions, who would offer an obstruction in thy retreat or devotion; and for thy singular consolation, seek in secret retirement to entertain thyself with the holy apostles, and brethren of Jesus, that they may speak to thee of the kingdom of God, and declare how great is the happiness of the elect; and how, by passing through many tribulations, thou mayest attain their happy society.

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

VIII

The Saints prophesy of and explain the Spiritual Advent.

JESUS CHRIST teaches us to pray that we may do the will of God on earth as the Blessed do in heaven: "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven" (St. Matt. VI. 10).

Our Lord called David a man according to His own heart, because David did His will: "I have found David . . . a man according to My own heart, who shall do all My will" (Acts XIII. 22). David was always prepared to embrace the Divine will, as he himself declares: "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready" (Ps. CVIII. 1). And all that he asked of the Lord was, to teach him to do His will. "Teach me to do Thy Will" (Ps. CXLIII. 10). One act of perfect uniformity to the Divine will is sufficient to make a saint. Witness a St. Paul; while yet a persecutor of the Church, he was enlightened and converted by Jesus Christ: upon which, how did he proceed? What did he say? All he did was to offer himself to the Divine will, saying: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts IX. 6). And behold our Lord declared him to be a vessel of election, and apostle of the

Gentiles : "This man is to Me a vessel of election, to carry My name before the Gentiles" (Acts IX. 15). Yes, for he who gives his will to God, gives Him everything.

This indeed is all that God expects from us : "Son, give Me thy heart" (Prov. XXIII. 26). That is, thy will. "We can make no offering," says St. Augustine, "so pleasing to God as to say to Him, Take thou possession of us!" We give our whole will to Thee ; make known to us what Thou requirest of us, and we will accomplish it.

If then we would give full pleasure to the Heart of God, we must endeavour to conform ourselves to His Divine will, and not only conform ourselves, but make ourselves one with all His appointments. Conformity means our joining our will with the will of God ; but uniformity means our making the Divine will and our own will but one, so that we will nothing but what God wills and God's will alone is our will. This is the summit of perfection to which we should always aspire ; this should be the object of all our actions, of all our desires, meditations, and prayers.

In regard to that little of thy will which thou now willingly forsakest, thou shalt for ever have thy will in heaven.

For there thou shalt find all that thou willest, all that thou canst desire. There thou shalt enjoy all good without fear of ever losing it.

THE LITTLE ALPHABET OF THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST[1]

SHEW me, O Lord, Thy ways, and teach me Thy paths. Yea, I beseech Thee, O my God, instruct me in the ways of a good life, for the saving of my soul.

The words of the Master:—

A. Love to be unknown, and to be accounted for nothing; for this is more healthful and more useful to thee than to be applauded of men.

B. Be thou benevolent to all, both to the good and to the evil; and be burdensome to none.

C. Keep thy heart from wandering thoughts; keep thy mouth from vain speech, and all thy senses under the rein of discipline.

D. Love solitude and silence, and thou shalt find great peace and a good conscience; for in a multitude there is much noise, and a great distraction of the heart.

E. Choose Poverty and Simplicity, and be thou content with a few things, and thou wilt not soon be given to murmur.

[1] The original contained a few references to the Religious Life.

F. Shun conversation with worldly men, for thou art not able to be satisfied with both God and men ; with things eternal, and things transitory.

G. Give thanks unto God always from the heart, as well as from the mouth, even in trouble and in sorrow ; for God providently disposeth all things in the world, with a true and righteous judgment after the counsel of His Eternal Wisdom.

H. Humble thyself in all things, and humble thyself to all ; and thou shalt be deserving of thanks from all. Thou wilt also be acceptable to God, and beloved of men ; the devil will quickly flee from thee, because of the virtue of Humility, which is wholly contrary to him.

I. In every good work have a pure intention to please God, who is the Inspector of the heart, and loveth the just and pure.

K. Account such as persecute thee and speak evil against thee as thy rarest friends and benefactors ; for if thou rightly judgest and considerest the matter, thou canst acquire great gain thereby. For they who oppose thee in what is evil are profitable to thee for what is good.

L. The kingdom of God is obtained by labour and pains, by tears and cries. Paradise is lost by delights and honours.

M. A great gift of God is to be poor in this world for Christ's sake, and to keep in the lowest

place. The devil is continually tempting thee to seek after high things, to go about after honours, and to avoid what is despised ; so that the climber may fall down backwards, after that he has domineered for a brief space over the poor. Account the least gift as great, and thou shalt be accounted worthy to receive greater.

N. Despise no one ; hurt no one. Condole with the afflicted ; assist the needy ; and never, for doing this, extol thyself.

O. Let thy whole time be usefully spent with God; for nothing is more precious than the time allowed thee to obtain the kingdom of God in perpetuity. Exhibit also to all men a friendly, courteous, and affable behaviour. Every good work refer to the glory of God ; and do nothing without counsel and deliberation.

P. In every work thou undertakest, always in the first place inquire whether it be pleasing or displeasing to God. Do nothing against thy conscience either for fear or love. In matters that are doubtful have recourse to the Holy Scriptures ; and do not confide too much in thyself. Learn to be silent rather than to speak ; and be willing rather to be instructed than to teach ; for it is safer to be hid than to appear.

Q. Do not give thy judgement in other matters which do not appertain to thee, neither do thou intermeddle with them if thou wouldst always have

peace. He who zealously follows the common duties of life, and avoids singularity will be more beloved, and will more quickly arrive at a good end.

R. Return to the interior matters of thine heart, and shut the door of thy lips. Do not begin to wander after the various desires of the world, when the devil tempts thee. Listening to evil things is hurtful to the soul; the beholding of beauty is a temptation, and the bearing of censure is disturbing. Depart therefore from the passionate man, from the ignorant and dissolute also, and abide alone with God in silence.

S. Be temperate in thy diet, modest in thy apparel, prudent in thy words, honourable in thy behaviour, deliberate in counsel, strong in adversity, humble in prosperity, grateful for benefits, cheerful under contempt, patient under pain, and discreet in everything thou doest.

T. Fear to offend God, even by the least neglect or defect in thy duty. Do not presume when things are prosperous, neither despair when things are adverse. The fear of God will make thee depart from what is sinful, and will solicit thee to engage in every good work, that the good thou doest may be well done.

V. Sell all thy advantages to God, and He will give thee better in one hour, by His grace coming to thee. No one is so rich, no one so free, as

he who hath given himself, and all that he hath to God, and who by love hath bought Christ who hath redeemed the world by His Cross.

21. Let Christ be thy life; let Him be thy Lesson; let Him be thy Meditation, and thy Discourse; let Him be thy Desire, thy Gain, thy whole Hope, and thy Reward. If thou seekest anything else but God purely, thou wilt suffer loss; thou shalt labour and shalt find no rest.

To serve God is the blessedness of the soul, the health of the body, the skill of the spirit, yea, it is life. He sings sweet hymns to God who always praises God in the midst of his tribulations. The beginning and the end of every good life is to love God from the heart, to praise Him with the mouth, and to edify his brethren by his example.

Z. Come down, Brother Zaccheus, from the height of human knowledge. Come and learn in the school of God the way of humility, meekness, and patience; through which, by Christ teaching thee, thou wilt be able at length to attain to the glory of eternal blessedness.

The Conclusion.

Write . . . this Alphabet in thine heart as in the Book of Life. Every day look into thy paper (chartulam) and accustom thyself to good manners.

The words are few, but they have a deep mystery; and set forth the labours of those that attain to perfection. They serve to adorn the exterior, and give rest within. From a contempt and abnegation of thyself the life of a good religious man begins, and is carried on, until he comes to the very vision of God.

The Benediction

Blessed is that disciple who follows Christ, through the rough way; committing himself to Him, not choosing or refusing anything for himself; but bearing his cross daily, for Christ's sake, that he may with Him obtain great glory and Eternal life. Amen.

THE LIVING COMMUNION WITH THE DEPARTED SAINTS

THE LIVING COMMUNION WITH THE DEPARTED SAINTS

HORSTIUS

THESE chapters were written by the post-mediæval writer James Merlo Horstius (1597–1644), a parish priest of Cologne. Fellowship with the Saints through Christ, in an effective Communion, is of the essence of Catholicity, provided we read the word Saints in an inclusive enough manner. The mystical gospel of the transformation of human society into Christliness must be sought for in its more direct expression elsewhere in this book. But the value of what Horstius wrote exists in his treatment of the Christian tradition of the Communion of Saints from a point of view with which few Christians would disagree. Once we are rightly at home in the faith and reality of the Mystical Commonwealth, the vision of the true Social Parousia of Jesus may be readily expected to appear.

I

"Colloquy between Christ and man on the method and practice of honouring the Saints."

MAN. How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs and faints for Thy courts! For, when I contemplate the happiness of Thy elect, who now feast with Thee in Thy kingdom, and are inebriated with the plenty of Thy house, and are made to drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure, my soul too thirsts after Thee, the strong living God.

When shall I come, and appear before the face of God? My soul is weary of my life, that is full of so many miseries and pains.

Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly, and be at rest? For better is one day in Thy courts above thousands.

Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged! Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I long to be dissolved, and to be with Thee, my Christ Jesus.

Oh, how blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord! They shall praise Thee for ever and ever.

CHRIST. Have a little more patience, My son; and, to be the more sure of arriving there, first learn the way whereby the saints My friends have attained to glory.

Mark their footsteps, if thou wilt win the same race. See thou refuse not the toils and the wrestlings of those whose rewards delight thee.

None will be crowned but he who strides lawfully. Were not they, and even I Myself, obliged to toil and suffer, and so enter into glory?

And see, My elect, too, amidst those miseries of the flesh, endured to live while they longed to die; but they had learnt well from My words and example, that the kingdom of heaven should suffer violence, and the violent bear it away.

Nor shalt thou be deprived of those good things, if, like them, thou walk in innocence, and dispose in thy heart to ascend by steps, in the vale of tears, in the place that has been set for thee by thy first parents, and by thy own sin. But fear not, I, thy protector, am with thee.

I will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth. I, who have aided the saints, will not fail thee; and I will give thee My blessing, that thou mayest go from virtue to virtue, until, with My elect, thou see the God of gods in Sion, and art inebriated with the plenty of My house.

MAN. Blessed is the man whom Thou in-

structest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law. Teach me, I beseech Thee, to do Thy will, for I too long to be partaker with all that fear thee and keep Thy commandments.

CHRIST. Thy sanctification is My will. Be holy, because I am holy; from Me all the saints derived all the holiness they possessed.

I might propose to thee Myself only, as the perfect pattern of all virtue and perfection; for I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

I am the door; by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. But it will be very useful to thee to look upon My elect, thy brethren, like thyself in the infirmity of the flesh, who yet bravely overcame the world, the flesh, and the devil.

It may not perhaps seem wonderful, if a singular and extraordinary perfection is discovered in My works, because all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Me.

But thou canst not but wonder to see how the saints lived not according to the flesh, but, by a saving hatred of self, lost their lives in this world, that they might keep them to life eternal.

II

"Praise of the Saints."

CHRIST. In the first place, often hear, read, meditate upon, and admire the acts of the saints. Praise their virtues, their constancy, patience, fortitude; celebrate their obedience, poverty, and contempt of the world.

For the more marks of virtue thou celebratest in them, the more miracles thou celebratest of My power and goodness.

If, therefore, thou wilt honour My friends who reign with Me in glory, or venerate one of the saints whom thou most lovest as thy patron, and wouldst render them an acceptable service, praise God, and give Him thanks, for having chosen, from all eternity, this saint to be His friend; for predestinating, calling, justifying, and, finally, glorifying him; for infusing into him grace and virtues; for giving him so many opportunities of doing good; for protecting him amid the many temptations, deceits, snares, and dangers of this life; for enabling him to persevere to the end, and for crowning him now with so much glory and honour in heaven.

Praise him, lastly, for warning and arousing you by their example, to contend, by fighting bravely, for a similar prize and reward.

There is, therefore, no reason to apprehend derogation to My praise and glory from the praises of the saints. For it is impossible to praise their virtues without praising Me, Who am the author of all virtue and grace.

For without Me they could do nothing; I gave them the will and the power. All the praise, therefore, of the saints returns to Me as its source.

I am the vine: they were branches, which could have borne no fruit of themselves, unless they had abided in the vine. Therefore, in rewarding them, I crown, not so much their good works, as My own gifts.

But they have always themselves candidly acknowledged that they had nothing but what they had received, and, though they did all their duty, still they confessed themselves unprofitable servants.

Hence they had never any vain-glory, but always gave glory to My name. Observe, and follow this example, if thou wilt truly praise the saints, and God in His saints.

MAN. But to me Thy friends, O Lord, are made exceedingly honourable; their principality is exceedingly strengthened. For who is able worthily to praise Thy saints?

My eyes are dazzled by the majesty and glory of those who shine in Thy presence as the brightness of the firmament, and sparkle with as many virtues as the sky with stars.

Thou art truly wonderful, O Lord, in Thy saints; I praise and glorify Thee for Thy boundless goodness, because Thou hast so abundantly presented them with blessings of sweetness; Thou hast set on their head a crown of precious stones; with glory and honour Thou hast crowned them, O Lord.

III

Invocation of the Saints.

CHRIST. It is part of the praise and glory of the saints to be invoked for succour, and to protect you in necessity. True indeed it is, that thy help is from Me alone, and that there is salvation in none other, but only in My name.

But I have freely granted this to My elect, that, since they have served Me faithfully, and with their whole heart, I am more open and ready to bestow My assistance and grace upon those whose cause the saints, who are My intimate friends, have undertaken, as patrons and intercessors, to plead before Me.

For the Church triumphant is united to the militant in the bond of charity; and the article of the communion of saints, which you profess daily in the creed, reminds you how profitable it is to you to implore and to honour the saints, whom I have honoured so highly.

How often have I withdrawn from a people My

scourges! How often have I spared kingdoms, provinces, and states for My servants' and elect's sake, who have stood crying to Me to turn away My anger.

And if the prayer of the just prevailed so greatly when they lived in the flesh exposed to so many miseries and failings, what will it not effect, when, placed far beyond all corruption of nature, they live happy with Me, as My friends and associates, in My kingdom?

There, in fact, they are so much the more inclined to pity, as they have been brought so much nearer to the very fountain of pity, and have a truer knowledge of your sorrows.

For that happy home has not lessened, but enlarged their charity. They are, indeed, already in harbour, but they see you tossing and suffering shipwreck on the sea.

Then, when you invoke them, they instantly have recourse to Me to help you, nor is it just that I should shame them, or refuse them any request.

MAN. Thy words are sweet, O Lord, for I, a sinner, unworthy, but needing help, often know not whither to fly, when for the many sins I am stained with, I dare not appear in Thy presence.

But now I will come more boldly, under the

shadow of those whom Thou lovest, that, by the merits and prayers of them that please Thee, I may obtain what I cannot by my own. Oh that I were partaker with all that fear Thee, and that keep Thy commandments!

IV

"Imitation of the Saints."

CHRIST. But know, My son, that it is in vain for one to praise and invoke the saints who takes no pains to be like them. For the life of the saints is the rule for thee and the rest of My faithful servants to live by.

You are running the same race, why not, then, hold the same course? Is it possible that you are seeking life, yet going the way whose end leads to death?

Oh, how many there are among those who bear My name and My badge, whose practice it is to clothe themselves, with the rich man, in purple and fine linen, to feast sumptuously every day, to spend all their life in pleasures, and yet presumptuously to promise themselves the death and the portion of Lazarus!

They lead bad lives with wicked Balaam, and yet most senselessly wish their last end to be like the saints! What can be greater madness? How can they presume to demand what they have not sown?

What! do they who, in slumbering, sporting, and feasting, pass their days in pleasure, claim wages with My labourers, who have borne in My vineyard the burden and heat of the day? Do they serve the world and the flesh, and then claim their wages of Me? Can anything be more extravagant?

My Father has, indeed, entrusted to Me a stewardship; but that is to give wages to the labourers only. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that sows in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption; but he that sows in the Spirit shall reap life everlasting.

But thou, My son, regard My faithful labourers who have been eminent for true religious perfections. They serve Me in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labour and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayers and holy meditations, in many revilings and persecutions.

How frequent were they, and fervent in holy exercises; they never relaxed their unsubdued spirit from prayer. How rigid was the abstinence with which they laboured to fortify themselves against every assault of concupiscence!

Reflect upon this, My son, and you will see that what thou dost is little more than nothing. What is thy life in comparison of theirs, in whose company thou desirest to be crowned?

THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST'S UNION AND FELLOWSHIP WITH THE CHURCH

THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST'S UNION AND FELLOWSHIP WITH THE CHURCH

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

THOMAS AQUINAS was a great realist and brought much sound common sense into the treatment of every dogma. There is one thing to be said in favour of realism, and that is that it was, and is, and will be, the point of view of the "Son of man." I mean to say that the great body of humanity will always think realistically, or else it will not think at all. Catholicity has always recognised this fact and taken the Gospel to be a bodily reality of the truths of Christ. The Schools and academic teachers may criticise this realism, but it is quite unscientific to talk of a religion of humanity which does not recognise the fundamental fact of humanity, taken as a whole, namely, that mankind wants real bread, real presences, real saints, real unions of saints. The great merit of Aquinas was that with all his vast learning and scholastic

science, he never lost sight of the people's point of view in treating every truth of God as a reality, embodied in the Church of Christ once and for all eternity. In this sense he is the model for every future doctor in the Church ; not as to his forms of learning, but as to the spirit and manner in which he recognised the facts of the people's point of view as the right starting-place for any truly effective treatment of the religion of humanity.

Of the Grace of Christ as Head of the Church

As the whole Church is spoken of as one mystical body, by its likeness to the natural body of a man, with its diverse acts done by diverse members, so Christ is said to be the Head of the Church, according to the similitude of a human head.

St. Paul teaches the Romans: "As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." And in a like strain he writes to the Corinthians: "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. . . . And God hath set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him. . . . Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the Body of Christ and members in particular."

Here me may consider three things: 1. Order. 2. Perfection. 3. Virtue, or power.

1. Order: because the head is the first part of

man, beginning from above. And hence every principle, or beginning, is wont to be called a head.

2. Perfection: because in the head there flourish all the senses both interior and exterior, there being in the other senses touch alone.

3. Virtue, or power: because the power and motion of the other members and the government of them in their acts is from the head, on account of the sensitive and motive power there dominant.

Hence a ruler is called the head of the people.

Now all these three spiritually belong to Christ. For:

1. By reason of his propinquity to God, His grace is higher than, and before that of others, although not in the sequence of time. For all others have received grace in respect of His grace, as says the Apostle to the Romans: "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

2. He has perfection, as having the fullness of all graces.

3. He has the power of causing graces to flow into all members of the Church, as it is written: "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

To give grace, or the Holy Ghost, belongs to Christ, since authoritatively He is God; but instrumentally it belongs to Him also as He is man,

inasmuch as His Humanity is the instrument of His Divinity.

Thus His actions, done of the power of His Divinity, brought salvation to us, as causing grace in us, and that both by merit and by efficiency.

True, the Head of Christ, though He is man, is also God; but that He is God no more prevents Him from being the Head of the Church than the ruler of a city, who is also head of a family, interferes with the relation of the latter as head of the members of his own household.

The head has a manifest eminence in respect of the other members of the body; but the heart has a hidden influence. And so the Holy Ghost is compared to the heart, because He invisibly quickens and unites the Church; while Christ is compared to the Head, by reason of His visible human nature, according to which He as man rules men.

The human body has a natural relation (*ordo*) to the rational soul, which is its own proper form, and its mover. Inasmuch as the soul is the form of the body, the body receives from the soul life and other properties belonging to the human body by reason of its species.

But inasmuch as the soul is the mover of the body, the body instrumentally serves the soul. The Humanity of Christ, therefore, possesses its power of influence because it is united to the

Word of God, to whom the Body is united by means of the Soul.

Hence, the whole Humanity of Christ, Body and Soul, influences and flows in upon men, both body and soul; but principally it flows in upon the soul, and secondarily upon the body.

In one way, the members of the body are, as St. Paul wrote to the Romans, instruments of righteousness unto God.

In another, the life of glory is derived from the soul by the body, as the apostle says to them in another place: "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

He writes also to the Philippians: "Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself."

Christ is the head of all men, although not of all men in the same manner.

There is this difference between the natural body of a man and the mystical body of the Church, that the members of the natural body exist together and all at the same time, while the members of the body mystical do not all exist at the same time.

They do not naturally so exist either, since the body of the Church is made up of men who have been from the beginning of the world, who are now, or who will be even unto the end; nor by grace, since even of those who do exist together and at the same time, some as yet lack grace, while others have it.

Of the members of the Body Mystical, some are so actually, others are so potentially.

Of those who are so actually there are three grades. 1. Those who are so by faith. 2. Those who are so by charity, while yet in the way. 3. Those who are so by fruition in the fatherland.

Accordingly:

1. First and principally Christ is the head of those who are actually united to Him by glory.

2. Of those who are actually united to Him by charity.

3. Of those who are actually united to Him by faith.

4. Of those who are united to Him only potentially, and not as yet actually, but to be actually united according to the Divine predestination.

5. Of those who, although potentially united to Him, will never be actually united, not being predestinated. And these last ceasing, when they leave this world, to be even potentially united, thereby wholly cease to be members of Christ.

St. Paul wrote to St. Timothy: "The living

God is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who believe." And St. John, in his first general epistle: "Jesus Christ the righteous is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Unbelievers, although they are not actually of the Church, are yet of the Church potentially. And this potentiality is founded on two things. 1. Primarily and principally on the virtue or power of Christ, which is sufficient in order to the salvation of the whole human race. 2. On the freedom of their own wills.

That the Church be glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, is the last end to which we attain by the Passion of Christ. This will be in our fatherland, and not while we are yet in the way; for if, while we are here, we say "We have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Where there is one body there is necessarily one head. There is said to be one body when there is one multitude, ordained to one end, although the individuals who compose it have diverse and distinct acts to perform and offices to fulfil. Now to one end, and that the glory of the Divine fruition, both angels and men are ordained. Hence the mystical body of the Church consists of not men only, but also of angels.

Of all this multitude the Head is Christ: (1) as

nearest of kin to God; (2) as sharing His gifts more perfectly, not only than men, but than even angels; and (3) because as flowing from Him, not only men but angels also receive.

And so St. Paul writes to the Colossians: "Ye are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power." And again to the Ephesians: "God, the Father of Glory, raised Christ from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body."

The Church "in the way" is the congregation of faithful wayfarers; the Church in the fatherland is the congregation of comprehenders. Now Christ was not only a wayfarer, but a comprehender also. And so He is the Head not only of all faithful wayfarers, but of all comprehenders, whether angels or men.

The habitual personal grace of Christ, belonging to Him as an individual, and being that whereby His Soul was justified, was the same in essence with that grace according to which He is the Head of the whole Church, and the Justifier of others. These graces differ however in idea.

THEOLOGIANS AND MYSTICAL WRITERS

ST. IRENÆUS. Bishop of Lyons A.D. 177. Disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John the Evangelist.

ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA. Famous Christian Platonist of the beginning of the third century.

ST. ATHANASIUS. Champion of the doctrine of the divinity of Christ.

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA. Belonged to the school of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA. The noted opponent of Nestorius.

ST. EPIPHANIUS. Wrote an important work against heresies. Bishop of Salamis.

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS. The epitomiser of Greek theology.

ST. CYPRIAN. Latin Father, Bishop of Carthage; martyred A.D. 258.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS (1225–1274). Called the "Angelic Doctor"; a Dominican; the greatest of all Latin theologians.

ST. BONAVENTURE (1221–1274). The name given to John of Fidenza; General of the Franciscans; friend of St. Louis; a leading Franciscan; also called the "Seraphic Doctor."

JOHN OF RUYSBROECK (1293–1381). A Flemish Mystic, author of *Spiritual Nuptials;* a friend of Tauler; praised by Maeterlinck.

RICHARD ROLLE (1300–1349). A Yorkshire mystical writer of much beauty. His works are edited by C. Horstmann (Sonnenschein). He wrote chiefly on the Passion, and though inspired with the idea of "Fellowship," these writings are a class of their own, and are only quoted in this work to illustrate divine fellowship in general.

WALTER HILTON (?–1395). An Augustinian Canon of Thurgarton; author of *The Scale of Perfection.*

MEISTER ECKHARDT (1260–1327). The most noted of the Dominican Mystics; a profound philosopher; accused of heresy.

DR. JOHN TAULER (1300–1361). A Dominican preacher, noted for his popular expositions of Mysticism.

MOTHER JULIANA OF NORWICH (1343–1443). She lived most of her life in an anchorage by the Church of St. Julian at Norwich. Her *Revelations* were received at the age of thirty.

Theologia Germanica. A well-known anonymous work by a German Mystic.

THOMAS HAEMMERLEIN, called À KEMPIS (1380–1471). Probable author of the *Imitation;* writer of many other devotional works.

LOUIS DE BLOIS, called BLOSIUS (1506–1564). A Benedictine writer noted for wisdom and holiness; Abbot of Liessies.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS (1542–1591). Famous Spanish Mystic, friend of St. Teresa; author of *The Ascent of Carmel* and *The Night of the Soul.*

JAMES MERLO HORSTIUS (1597–1644). A parish priest of Cologne, born at Horst; a careful student of St. Bernard's works.

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